

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY



APRIL 1933

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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE for MAY

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The Mystery of Lettermore. By Dr. K. Heanley.

Wild Flowers in Literature. By Vernon Rendall.

An Outpost of the Foreign Legion. By J. M. Sothern,
Jr. (late 2^{me} Régiment Étranger).

JOHN MURRAY, Albemarle Street, LONDON, W.




THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL 1933.

JOHN GALSWORTHY THROUGH FRENCH EYES.

BY JEANNE VÉRON.



SOME twenty-five years ago, sitting in my lodgings in Graham Street, I opened a book called *Fraternity*, by John Galsworthy. Struck by its mixture of poetical sensualism and dry satire, I wrote at once to the well-known author of *The Pleasant Land of France*, then Rowland Edmund Prothero, now Lord Ernle, to ask whether he thought, like me, that *Fraternity*, if translated would catch the attention of the French public. Mr. Prothero wrote for me to Mr. Heineman the publisher, and I was given the rights of translation. I wanted to produce rather an adaptation than a translation, and in a very frank letter to Mr. Heineman I criticised the long-winded sentences of parts of the book. Fortunately my letter was shown to the author and I received an invitation from Mr. Galsworthy to go and see him in Addison Road—I have said 'fortunately,' because this very outspoken letter led me to a very pleasant intercourse with Mr. and Mrs. Galsworthy.

I was ushered into a small sitting-room where two magnificent black spaniels made friends with me immediately. A tall man opened the door, leaned forward, peering slightly as short-sighted people do. Then seeing me between his two dogs, a broad and most attractive smile transfigured his rather austere face. 'Les amis de nos chiens sont nos amis !' Mr. Galsworthy told me then that Mr. Heineman had shown him my letter, and that he understood my French point of view ; but that he, personally, wanted translations to be as literal as possible. I again told him that passages were far too long for the French taste, and laughingly added that they would not help the sale of *Fraternity* in France ; though the book as a whole would certainly appeal to the French public. We went to the study and looked through many manuscripts and contracts to make sure in which books the rights of translation into French had been already granted. I left after one of the most pleasant and literary afternoons I ever spent, and shall never forget the kind and understanding look which Mr. Galsworthy gave me as he opened the gate of his little front garden. Through his literary agent, the late Mr. Pinker, I was given the

rights of translation of *Villa Ruben*, *The Island Pharisees*, *A Commentary*, *The Patrician*, and the *Plays*.

The Galsworthys and I met again both in London, when they were living in the Adelphi, and in Paris, where I enjoyed with them an excellent *déjeuner* in one of those small and exclusive French restaurants known only to the English epicure. At the latter of these meetings we discussed *The Eldest Son*, the typescript of which I still have in my possession, annotated and corrected by the author. I have also a very interesting and voluminous correspondence about my translations. Some ten years later, after the war, when I was away in France, I received the news that my contract was at an end. My translations were never published.

Since the brilliant essay of Monsieur Chevrillon on Mr. Galsworthy, the literary public in France knows his name and considers him to be one of the most typical and illuminating writers on English life during the past thirty years. But those who cannot read English, and who have not lived in England, cannot fully appreciate the quality of John Galsworthy's acuteness of vision and vastness of human sympathy; for the very words which he coins come straight from his English mind and heart, and French words cannot express certain thoughts and certain feelings which grow exclusively in the soil of British education and tradition. The half-poetical, half-sordid descriptions of London, in *Fraternity*, are for me the most characteristic expression of Mr. Galsworthy's genius. But, then, I have lived in London for twenty-five years. Even after trying seven times to translate *Fraternity*, my French words never conveyed the quality of realistic lyricism in the English of Mr. Galsworthy. The character of Hilary, his wife, and the little model are practically impossible to understand for French people who have never lived in England and do not know English. Hilary is the product of the public school and of the University with its lack of principles but steadying power of tradition and form. So too Bianca is the essentially English product of the late Victorian era with its æsthetic aspirations and its inborn inhibitions. As for the little model, she is entirely an imaginary character outside the experience and comprehension of French people. In France, in similar circumstances, she would have been either just a *modèle* with all the degradation attached to that profession, or a perfectly simple and honest country girl in search of a post as domestic servant.

The Patrician is for French people a much easier book to under-

stand, partly because since George Sand we take for granted that the English patrician is the model of all virtues; partly because the political machinery and *milieu* in England has been, since the Great War, very well known to the similar *milieu* in France; and partly because the love-story between a married woman of no importance and a young man of much importance is of all times and of all countries. Barbara is perhaps the most exquisite *jeune fille du monde* in English literature; and Courtier the last of the Don Quixotes. The meeting of the two before they part for ever is the poem of Dartmoor. If love still exists in the hearts of young people, no girl can wish for a finer love-song than the old Sicilian song of Courtier: 'Thus will I sit and sing, with love in my arms; watching our two herds mingle together, and below us the far, divine, Cerulean Sea.' Also, in *The Patrician* there is the aristocratic hierarchy, which helps the French reader. I remember so well asking Mr. Galsworthy to allow me in my translation to distinguish his characters by their definite titles instead of speaking of them as 'Lord' and 'Lady' so and so—titles which to French readers are meaningless. When it came to 'Lady Babs,' I had to put a footnote. I had to add many footnotes, for John Galsworthy had a sense of humour of his own and enjoyed introducing a pun (true to Oxford tradition), and I ask my English reader how an unfortunate Frenchman, who has never been in England, and who reads in a French translation such a sentence as 'Someone raised a cheer "for the Terriers"!' can understand without a '*note du traducteur*'? Such notes were my joy!

'A Man of Devon,' in *Villa Rubein and Other Stories*, was, I think, one of the first short stories written by John Galsworthy. It shows, like *The Island Pharisees*, lack of composition; but it also shows a directness and a strength of expression which drew from Jules Lemaitre this criticism: 'c'est mal foutu, mais c'est plein d'idées!' Already in 'A Man of Devon' we find the glorious semi-pagan, semi-biblical description of Devonshire which heralds the perfect golden *poème en prose* of *The Apple Tree* and of passages in *The Patrician*. I have also one or two vivid letters of John Galsworthy's rides on Dartmoor near Manaton. If *The Island Pharisees* has been published in French, the discriminating French reader will find in some of the characters and even in some of the sentences, the embryo of almost all Mr. Galsworthy's plays and practically all his novels, except his *romans à tendance* such as the *Freelands* or the *Saint's Progress*. The *Hero of the Dark Flower* hints one

side of the dual nature of the author as Ferrand gives us a glimpse of its counterpart. Indeed, John Galsworthy, who had had all the advantages of birth, wealth, education and success which make the English gentleman, had another and a different self:—the free-lance, the advocate of the underdog, the friend of the weak, but always with the open eyes which made him so very lovable and sympathetic a personality that he never gave the impression of that horror of the age: the philanthropist.

ROBINSON CRUSOE.

THE train stopped on the sand hills by the sea,
The locomotive hissing quietly;
A seabird called—no other sound beside
The melancholy murmur of the tide:
Wild thyme I saw, and thistles, tufts of green
And slimy weed on rocks, with pools between.
And the old man rose, and put his head
Out of the window: 'Sonny, look,' he said,
'Ower beyond they nets, yon leaning post,
Robinson Crusoe lived upon this coast . . .'

I saw the swaying palm trees rising high
To burst green feathery rockets in the sky;
Deep down, a coral forest in dim light
Where scarlet fishes swam, and where at night
The water burned with phosphorescent glow—
Stars in the heaven, and in the sea below.
I saw the telltale footprints in the sand,
The war canoes come racing in, a band
Of fierce-eyed cannibals who roasted men . . .
Oh, for the grand days of adventure then!

The old man guessed my thought, and laughed. 'Ay ay,'
Said he, 'it's no' much worth, just sea an' sky,
Gey cauld it is, an' bleak, but he was glad,
Nae doot, to be at hame again, my lad.'

GEORGE WODEN.

THE RIVER OF ADONIS.

BY FREYA STARK.

IN the old days when Ishtar was honoured along the Phœnician coasts, pilgrims would take the causeway of white and rounded stones which follows the crest of the valley above the Nahr Ibrahim in north Syria. They would offer their vows and bring their troubles to the temple of Tammuz-Adonis at Afka, in a lonely amphitheatre of those hills.

The French have built a motor road from Tripoli, which must have been opened this year, and probably I was the last European to come upon the temple by the old paths and to find the traces of the gods neglected among the boulders of the stony hillsides in their own solitude. One must wander up into the heart of Lebanon, above its fringe of red-roofed villages and cultivated slopes, to know how solitary it can be.

Brummana stands above Beirut over 2,000 feet and listens from its ridge to the two voices of the mountains and the sea. There I visited my Druse guide Najm in a yellow stone house of his. The sunset was behind it, over the edge of the ridge, and a prickly pear-tree in the wall of its small court overhung the valley below.

Najm has become a gentleman since our last wandering, and now refuses to look after mules. But he said he would come out of friendship, and bring an inferior muleteer: and next morning before seven he appeared with two mules and a donkey and Majid, young and good-tempered, with one of those plump flat-nosed faces of the Phœnician tombs. We would go north-east, said I, and keep to the western side of the ridge of Lebanon, until in a day or two, when the Lord willed, we should come down upon Afka from the highlands: and we followed a little valley that I had last seen in the month of May filled with cistus and the dark Mediterranean lavender and had wished ever after to follow to its source; my idea of Paradise that I may follow to their lovely birthplaces all the streams and rivers I have had to leave half-way up their courses in this life.

This was October the 9th, 1929, and the land was filled with a

rich opulence of harvest, different but just as exquisite in its way as the gossamer veils of spring. Everything was honey-coloured or golden : the clusters on the vines and falling pale leaves of the mulberries ; the withering thorny scrub beneath the pines ; and by the brooks, clumps of yellow flowers with sticky leaves which they chop up to lay upon a wound and call tarkhun, as far as I can remember.

The air too was golden, with a last hum of bees in it, and the garnered sweetness of summer about to fall. The lonely valley held warmth like a cup. These Lebanon valleys are very secret : they are so deeply cloven that the winter sun never drops into them, and the villages with mulberry and olive terraces begin high above on upper ledges. In the heart of them, but for an occasional woodcutter, you will meet no human being. On frosty nights in winter, voices of the jackals running in packs rise from them and exasperate the village dogs : the treble of the young cubs, as they first run in the nocturnal raids, comes up sharp and excited : I have often listened to it, looking down from Brummana into the blackness below, with the long snowy shoulder of Sannin shining in starlight beyond. Then as the warm days come, these Voices of the night grow silent. The cyclamen with red-veined leaves appear in clefts of limestone ; and anemones down in the valley, out of reach of the Turkish wind. The sound of the snow-swollen water rises from its invisible bed below.

Now the ridge of Sannin had long stood brown and bare through the summer months, and we were going over it and beyond. We followed our stream till it led to its small head-waters, where the valley opened and the slopes gentled down and vineyards and villages came to meet us. From our solitude we climbed among neat houses with dahlias in garden plots where lodgers stay for the cooler air. Then down again through pine woods—the umbrella-topped pine of the Syrian hills—into solitude again : over a stone bridge with no parapet as the local fashion is : by a steep shoot of boulders taken to constitute a path : to the village of Metein, where I was to give a message to some Christian acquaintance of my friends in Brummana.

Najm looked glum over it, but said nothing when I suggested lunch with these people, and proceeded to carry my saddlebags into their best room in the lordly way of the Eastern guest.

Metein is a pleasant village, with a big space in the middle of it something between a square and a village green, and a palace and

fine gate with carved animals built by departed emirs. It looks on one side to the solitary flank of Sannin, now close and very stony, and on the other, down folded slopes to the coast between Beirut and Sidon. But our hosts, whether Maronite or Orthodox, were not pleased to see us. The lady of the house with several small daughters watched us as we consumed our own provisions: she gave monosyllabic answers and added nothing to the entertainment except a jug of water. This seemed an ungracious attitude in a country where it is quite the thing to wander and eat your meal in other people's drawing-rooms; and she must have felt some compunction, for presently she pulled herself together and sent one of the family for coffee: after which Najm shouldered the saddlebags and left with a certain truculent swagger he adopts among his enemies.

The reason of all this suddenly dawned upon me. I had brought a *Druse* into a Christian home. Even my charming Syrian landlady, who was brought up on French poetry and the finer feelings in a convent, and talks of tolerance in the positive way in which the *Morning Post* mentions its open-mindedness, even she quivers with vexation when I stop to chat with my *Druse* friends by their doorsteps, though she has shared the same village with them for years. And sure enough, no sooner had Najm vanished, than my hostess grew friendly and picked marigolds for me as we descended her steps under the vines. Still surrounded by her family, she watched Majid lead our small caravan out of the square to that part of the village where white-turbaned *Druses* enjoy their afternoon leisure on a sunny strip of road.

'Peace be upon you. How are you? Well, if it please God,' they cried in chorus while Najm emerged from among them. One of them came up to shake hands. 'Why did you not visit us?' said he. The matter of the lunch had evidently been under discussion.

'When you were in a *Druse* house, did you *ever* have to eat your own food?' snorted Najm as we jogged along the high road that climbs towards Sannin.

'No indeed,' said I. 'But I think the lady probably thought you had come to massacre them.'

Najm twirled his long moustache with rather a fatuous air, not displeased. He is a peaceful citizen now and owns a motor-car, and thinks of massacres with the faint wistfulness with which a respectably married man, rather bored, may recall the visions of

his youth. I am pacific, but only theoretically, and the lunch still rankled ; so I sympathised. There are many more Christians than Druses scattered in this part of the country. Four years before, when the French were at war round Damascus, they all lived in terror expecting to be killed, though as a matter of fact they were far better armed than the Druses. Druses, when they are dead, believe they go to China : it seems absurd, but it is true, that they mind being killed less than we do.

We were now reaching the last village on the western slope of Sannin. The pine-trees come to an end here, and the vineyards were filled with busy people vintaging. Donkeys with panniers of ripe grapes trotted along the road. Men greeted us, and brought bunches as a gift, for Najm was known here when he used to drive his mules. Muruj was the name of the village, a deceptive name for it means green meadows, and it was a stony little village on the ridge. As we climbed above it we saw men treading the grapes in a stone press by the roadside : they were above their knees in the purple fruit, treading it to make, not wine, but the sort of treacle they call ' dubs ' of which an inferior kind is also extracted from the carob bean ; and very delicious it is. The cheerful picture, with the business of the vintage going on all around in the land, the sense of prosperity and plenty, felt like Italy and the Georgics.

' Mitis in apricis coquitur vindemia saxis.'

For a moment one forgot the underlying fierceness of the East.

Here we left the main road and took a stony path, making gradually across the shoulder of the hill for the central hump of Sannin.

The air grew keener, the cultivated plots died away in ledges of limestone ; we came into the country of shepherds, of the older gods : a country of strange flat outcrops of stone, waterworn into labyrinths, into whose gullies the sun never enters. A fantastic world. The waters, creeping out from the hills through caverns, by subterranean waterfalls, here trickle among ferns and shade-loving plants through passages of these natural citadels where the wild beasts have their lairs. If you enter, you may wander for miles and see nothing of the outer world but a strip of sky a few feet wide some ten or twenty feet above you. The top is flat and must once have lain in great smooth slabs along the mountain flanks, till the water got to work and honeycombed it. And now in the late sunshine it glowed ; the black and grey stains of the limestone made shadows

among its twisted shapes; one might see there some mountain citadel with narrow streets and clustering flat roofs enchanted into stone.

Between these rocky areas were green uplands where the barley was sown and the shepherds live in summer, and far below us the Dog River and all its tributary ravines ran fanwise to the sea. A shepherd came along, black as an Ethiop from the sun, but with the fine oval face and aquiline profile rarely seen along the coast. He was fierce to look at, but friendly enough, and joined us for an hour or so. He told us about a wolf which had been haunting the path for the last few nights and by day took refuge in the Petrified City below. 'There must be many in winter,' said I.

'Many,' said he. 'But no one comes here at that season. We shall all be going down in a week or so.'

As he left, we turned a shoulder and saw the Khan Sannin above us beneath its mighty ridge.

Najm and Majid had been telling me so much of the splendours of Khan Sannin and its four hotels, that I feared a sort of Righi Palace, and had announced my intention of going to one of the simpler of these luxurious mansions. What I saw, however, were four little rough stone houses with a few trees beside a stream, quite dwarfed by the wall of red sandstone and shale which closed in the horizon above them like a sleeping panther with long thin flank.

On a little terrace of hardened earth beneath a tree, in front of one of the houses, two gentlemen in long overcoats and slippers welcomed us to a gramophone. The landscape was pleasant below. The stream gurgled down to a few tilled fields, then vanished over the edge into the triangle where the sea was—remarkably high up, I thought, as the sun dipped into it. The caprices of the horizon always seem extraordinary and unexpected, like most natural laws.

Satisfied with the outer world, I next went to examine my room. There were two to choose from, with eight beds between them. They were depressing. The young man in the overcoat held a candle. 'Everything you wish for. Everything you command,' he kept on saying brightly.

'Could you give me fresh sheets?' said I, making for essentials.

'Sheets?' His face fell. 'Sheets? Ah no. We have no more sheets. There is a pair on every bed,' he added in an explanatory way.

'Ah. One should come at the beginning of the season.'

'True.' He brightened again. 'At the beginning of the season everything is clean.'

One's pleasures must be paid for, I reflected, and envied Najm and Majid in the stable.

We had rice and bread and curds for supper, a lantern under the tree, and the gramophone making appalling noises under the moving stars.

What with one thing and another, we did not get off till six-thirty next morning to climb Sannin. There is a mule track from the south-west, but it is a long way round, and I decided to walk straight up, though it is a wearisome three hours' grind, a steep shaly slope, the pet abomination of any mountaineer. Small thorny bushes held the earth together, and we climbed till the sunlight struck us slanting across the mountain's eastern height. There we hit the path, and went up over one round shoulder after another to the summit. There are no sharp crags, but a steep horseshoe semicircle north and west, while south and eastward swelling brown downs descend pitted with snow-filled hollows. Here was no beauty, but a massive majesty; the far loveliness of the coastline; the plain of Coelesyria spread below; and, like a sister wave, Hermon in the south. For Sannin, the northern mount Hor as some say, is over 8,000 feet in height, for all that he has been under the sea: I found a fossil shell upon the ridge.

As we climbed the last bit, just beneath the summit, ten eagles sailed into the sky on our right hand. Very slowly, with great and heavy wings, they followed one another at a few seconds interval from their hidden eyrie in the rocks. Their blackish feathers were shining in the sun. The blue sky was infinitely deep below them. The ancient augur would wait for such a sight in days when the world was more lonely and its freedom shared with the wild things of the woods and rocks. I made my way up to the summit with a certain awe, as having stumbled upon the old Religion unawares.

We rested near the Khan through the afternoon.

A string of camels had come over the pass by Xahle from Baalbek, and browsed about the fields, giving a little life to its quiet landscape. I lay by the stream where Najm, quoting the Eclogue without knowing it, had told me that the grass was soft as sleep. A pretty Christian woman came to me, took me to an

harbour of green boughs, and gave me coffee. She showed me her little stone house which was really the hotel we should have gone to, with white beds and satin quilts that made one wistful. To change one's inn, however, is a serious matter : I felt it would be unkind. The woman told me that as they plough new ground here in the upper valley, they come upon buried cedar-roots, trees of which there is no sign now for many and many a mile. Truly an ancient land.

Next morning we again made our way over an eastern shoulder, fairly precipitous, among patches of summer-sown barley now bright green, and small steep fields where the men behind their ox and donkey hold the plough at what looks an impossible angle. They were ploughing by hand too in some places ; with a long pointed spade managed by one man while two others held the ends of a rope passed round the spade where shaft and iron join. The first man pushed into the ground ; the other two pulled to ease him of the weight as he lifted ; and the work went on at a great pace. They were dressed in the short-sleeved red coats that can still be seen in the streets of Antioch, with baggy blue trousers below. As we climbed, the valley was filled with greetings shouted across its clear morning spaces to and from our little caravan.

For three hours we skirted along the uplands, and met only one small habitation ; but on our left hand we looked down on the cultivated valleys, the winding French roads and neat villages, the dark cuts of the streams and deep receiving bosom of the sea.

We ourselves were coming into a most barren country, where the track grew more and more indistinguishable from the surrounding landscape. We lost it once and found it again. We were making for two springs, the Fountain of Milk and the Fountain of Honey, of whose light and sweet and lovely waters we had been told. I had also seen on my map a name which sounded like a castle, and meant to find it, though Najm hoped to deceive me into going by. He is unable to see any sense in ruins.

Providence thwarted him, however. Just at the critical moment we came upon a sportsman with a white cloth on his head and a gun in his hand, the only human creature we had seen for hours. He led us down a path to where a Phœnician temple faces west over many valleys to Beirut and the sea.

E. M. told me that when he was in Syria with the 57th Division

during the War, he once, in a waste uninhabited stretch of country, came upon a Roman trophy. The symbols of the Legions were carved upon it, and he was able to recognise Mark Antony's legion among them and read the forgotten soldiers' message. Such are the joys of life for the erudite. I, as I came upon my temple so unexpectedly, wished I knew a little more about the Phœnicians and their ways, and might at least make out what the ancient craftsman said when he cut strange letters in the stone. No doubt it is all put down in Cook's *Guide to Syria*, for the place is visited now and then; but I have carefully refrained from looking, for after all an unknown temple is not a possession to be thrown away lightly, and it belongs to an enchanted day. Qal'at el Fakra is the name of the place: the reader who likes information is invited to look for it in the text-books. There are two temples, a smaller and a larger, of which three courts are still visible with walls and pedestals. There had been idols, said our guide, but they had been carried away.

A few hundred yards above the temples on the rise is a square half-crumbled tower made by later builders out of the old dressed stones: it is here, on one of the corner stones, that I saw the lettering. A steep little stairway, which looks out at intervals through arrow slits, circles round a central empty shaft which our guide called the Well of Blood. He could not tell us whose blood, but the Gothic touch seemed appropriate: it made one feel like Horace Walpole on the Grand Tour. West of the tower and the temples, and coming right up to them, is one of the limestone labyrinths in which an army might make itself invisible. The air was cold there as a vault, and as I am nervous of caverns, I was glad to return into the sunlight, where Majid lay placidly asleep while Najm twisted his moustache with impatience.

'We have a long way to go,' said he.

'No matter,' said I. 'We can sleep in the hills. Our time is in the hands of Allah.' Which is an unfair advantage to take of a believer.

Up a little stony valley incredibly desolate, without tree or grass or anything but thorns, is the Spring of Milk, or rather Curds, just hidden round a corner. It looked so forbidding, and it really was getting so late, that I decided to take its charms on trust and push on to its sister Spring of Honey, farther on.

The path carried us across a great natural arch of limestone cut in a solid block, under which water trickles down from one of

those crater-like precipices of the country, gigantic piers carved by old inhuman forces of the world, silent as an amphitheatre from which the public has departed.

It was indeed impressively still.

In a hot country, the deepest silence is that of noon.

But there was something else here too. A feeling of attentiveness, of awareness from the walls of stone in their shadow—as if our coming alone had scattered invisible presences. It gave the sense, strangely alive, of a room recently occupied.

Who were we, to press so rudely into the last fastnesses of the country's gods? These high and silent places from which the streams drop down; these temples at their feet, facing westward, far above the coast and its trade, close to the old and cruel secrets of the hills; these tell you more than books of the ancient feeling of the land: you worship no longer, but you know that the gods are there.

Travelling now under the blazing heat of noon, we had the Wadi Salih, the last northern tributary of the Dog River, below us. To it belongs the Spring of Honey. We turned a sudden corner and saw a lovely sight. For there it was, a foaming stream, leaping out of the ground into a little empty valley, with about two hundred sheep and goats and their shepherds camped beside it. The sheep clustered under what little shade the steep hillside afforded; the goats with long black ears and silky fleeces lay about on the white stones. Burnt black by the sun, under black felt caps and black turban looped down over the shoulder, the shepherds with their slow walk came up to us, leaning upon their staffs; fierce, keen, and friendly as the scene in which they stood. We settled down on the boulders, close to the many voices of the water. It ran swift and full. It filled the naked valley with a joyousness impossible to describe. A square white stone made our table. Without a word, one of the shepherds took a copper bowl from his waist and climbed up to the ewes: he brought it back foaming with milk and gave it to me. Najm, with great pride, disentangled a green watermelon from his handkerchief. The wild men and the two shepherd boys sat down with us. They came from Faraya, they said; a village down below. Every day they brought up the sheep and the goats to browse among the scrubby thorns and stones. Another bowl, the copper showing through its pewter colour like old Sheffield plate, was filled for me with the running water. I admired the lovely

shape. The men laughed. 'Do you think we are poor?' said one. 'We are rich.'

'Yes,' I said. 'You have a cup that is beautiful to look at, and you can fill it whenever you wish, and you let the stranger drink out of it when he comes your way. Is that not riches?'

'In truth, and by Allah, that is so,' they said, and laughed again. They were happy people, as hardy as their rocks. Najm and Majid, who never walk when they can ride, looked flabby beside them. The two shepherd boys, with bright eyes, sat one on either side and sucked my sweets. A tame black goat came up to sniff at the salt, and the dogs, waiting for bits, stood in an outer circle. The water ran in smooth and shining ridges like skeins of silk, with here and there a little curl of foam: now and then it tossed up a few drops into the sunshine. It was a happy place.

We could not stay long, for the best of the day's march was still before us and there is nowhere to sleep this side of Afka. We collected our animals, and one of our hosts, followed by two dogs, took us to where another valley opens eastward and leaves the stream of Honey behind.

Our new valley was a charming place at that season, for the bottom had been sown in terraces with summer barley. A shallow amber brook, which we used instead of a path, trickled through the middle under a lattice-work of poplars: and the green of the sprouting crops looked peculiarly vivid and fragile enclosed in barren sides.

Some hidden sweetness there must have been, for here were bees, living as it seemed in complete loneliness in hives cut out of hollowed pieces of tree-trunk. Farther on we came to the huts that presumably attended to them, but there was not a living soul in sight. This was the more tantalising because the landscape branches off here into three valleys equally uninhabited. None of us had ever been in this country before. Our goal was easterly, and I was evenly divided in my mind between the south and the north-eastern way. Najm, however, said he had his direction perfectly from the shepherds, and proceeded to put the mules at an indistinct track straight up the northern hill. To talk of my compass was useless: Najm put no faith in compasses, which he had never seen before.

After a while the path, having now got us into its power, began to show its true goblin nature and to identify itself more and more

with the torrent-bed. Where the torrent developed waterfalls, the path leaped up in smooth and shelving slabs. The mules, with quivering flanks, with sweat pouring down their fetlocks, hovered there unable to get a foothold, unable to turn, threatening to slip backwards off the edge. And as we rose so steeply, and looked behind us southward, we saw range upon range, lonely as an uninhabited star. Where would we sleep that night?

I made another attempt with my compass and found like many philosophers before me how useless it is to be right if no one else is right with you.

'That?' said Najm, looking with scorn at me and my instruments. 'That is good for saying one's prayers, but it does not know the way to Afka.'

'Neither do we,' I might have said, but didn't. Najm was looking ruefully over the way we had come, impossible for any mule descending.

'When we reach the top we shall see something,' said he, becoming platitudinous as one does when life is difficult.

And we did see something. Far down below we saw a valley, an open pasture-land with flocks and shepherds. Beyond its green ledges, a new and wooded landscape, new ranges wild and beautiful, the river of Adonis and its tributary streams: beyond these, the sea. The afternoon sun was slanting over it all: the voices of the shepherds, shouting to us, came faint and indistinguishable: the distance lay like a map outspread. It made one think of Moses, and remember that he never got there after all, for the hill on whose top we stood seemed equally steep on every side.

There was nothing for it. We each took an animal firmly by the rein and started. It must be annoying for a mule to have a human being just in front of him on a hillside where he wants to put his foot; but it is more agitating for the human being who is going to be stepped on. The mules, however, used their hind legs like toboggan slides and managed in the remarkable way they have. In a very short time we were safe on the grassy ledges that fringe the upper precipices of the Adonis stream.

All we had to do now was to continue in an easterly direction with the riverlands on our left hand and, on our right, the range we had just crossed, now risen to a wall of rock nearly perpendicular, with trees and bushes in its clefts. It curved with a mighty bend. The late afternoon began to lie in shadows on the deep ravines below, where the pilgrim ways climb from the sea. And

suddenly the great overhanging wall rounded into a bay. Opposite, across it, was the cavern, a black hole, small on that gigantic face. It was below us. Reddish ground covered with dwarf cypress-trees sloped towards it, a mile or more from where we stood.

It was an immense place. It seemed to live for itself alone, shut in from every side. Wild fig-trees and bushes hung from the cliffs. A white half-moon sailed in remote daylight far above, but the evening was around us. It held its ancient secrets, a sense of awe and fear.

We went down and down through the cypress hollows while the sunset glowed above.

In the twilight we came to where by the temple the village of Afka used to stand. The sliding land has thrice destroyed it: the last time, eighteen years ago, the temple also fell, and the inhabitants fled definitely, as from a place accursed, and settled in Baalbek. Now there is one poor house beside heaps of squared stones and a piece of temple wall half-hidden under a wild fig-tree. A cheap print of Mary and the Child, propped in an ancient drain, has taken the place of the forgotten gods; and the rags which flutter on the old tree's branches, in whose name are they knotted? Mary or Aphrodite? It were hard to say.

The cave opens some few yards up in the side of the precipice. Below it a square boulder, which had rolled down with the sliding land, looked like an altar in the deceiving light. The water was brown like a Devonshire stream. It flowed gently down a waterfall into a deep green pool. I knelt down to drink, and it was light and sweet. Wild mint and brambles, maidenhair and many fresh plants grew beside it. Where it crossed the path, our mules also were drinking gratefully: the tall cliffs around made them look small, like details of men and animals in an old-fashioned landscape, darkened by time as this was darkening with the falling night.

How strong, how unbelievably *living*, was still the ancient feeling of the place. The Christian saint who wandered in these stony wildernesses saw in the failing light the barren rocks up-reared in shining columns, saw the white shoulders, heard the sweet betraying laughter, knew the danger of the gods in their own land. All the voices of all the Hebrew prophets spake against them in vain.

Now the moonlight, pale and weak, began to shed its intimate radiance on the upper edges of the rocks. I would have waited

there in the shadow till the Crescent Goddess came. But the day had been long and the animals were tired. We climbed up to the little village of Muneitra, where the track that we ought to have followed comes in from the south.

Here were fields and fruit-trees and Sheikh Jibril, the only Christian among a population of Metauei, the strange Shi'a sect of north Syria, said to be less friendly than any other to strangers.

The Sheikh had been to America. He looked doubtfully upon me, an object difficult to fit in with his ideas of the West. But he gave me a white and yellow satin bed in a room filled with wardrobes and mirrors. And I sat through the evening and looked at his wife and held my breath : for surely the maidens of Ishtar in the days of her power were such as she.

A profile so lovely, so flawless and cruel. A beauty so inhuman, inscrutable—not soulless, but not kind. The little head, high at the back, low at the forehead where the hair waved slightly ; the brow a little full over the eyes ; the noble line of the eyebrow and nose straight-bridged as a Grecian, moulded below in a perfect curve to the little nostrils ; the mouth so statuesquely chiselled ; the flowerlike loveliness of chin and throat. Her hair was plaited loosely over each ear, and her dingy European clothes seemed to make the wonderful face even more remote and timeless. It held its own secret, like the valley below.

It was pain to hear that perfect mouth make the most trivial conversation.

The Sheikh presently slipped off his overcoat and climbed into one of the various beds in the room, where he smoked his narghile while I had my supper at a little table on the floor, and the lady talked of this and that ; the new road next year, and the turning of their house into an hotel. Presently she began to talk about herself, and told us of her great sorrow, the loss of a small daughter who died two years ago. She brought a photograph ; the little body dressed as for its confirmation, amid all the pitiful ornaments of death. As she held it, the tears fell down her cheeks in a passion of silent pain.

Terribly distressed, and with all the British incompetence in the face of emotion, I murmured grief and sympathy. She did not even hear. But Najm, who was squatting near by with his hands on his knees, suddenly drew a rasping breath like a clock about to strike, and in a nasal voice quite unlike himself, without

the slightest expression, began to rattle out pious aphorisms at terrific speed.

The Sheikh's wife looked up and her tears stopped.

'I thank you,' she said when Najm's breath gave out. 'You know what to say. It does one good.'

Najm began again.

'He is well educated.' She turned to me at the next pause.

'He has learnt how to speak. It is a consolation to hear him.'

'Yes,' said I, completely overcome.

Soon after I went to my room.

The moon shone down upon the cliffs of Afka. Like an immense chalice held up for some unearthly communion, the great amphitheatre was filled with light. That beauty too, indifferent and relentless, held its secret. A cat, slinking about its midnight doings, glared at me, with green eyes in the darkness in which I stood. I was an intruder here.

We had a long way before us next day to follow the Adonis River, the Nahr Ibrahim, to the sea; and we got up early and left at six, guided by a wild agile young Metauli boy in a brocaded coat much stained and torn. He took us by short cuts under the cliffs to Kartaba on the far side of the valley.

Here we saw a bear. It had been caught the day before in the woods and sat in an attitude of dejection with a muzzle on its nose, a poor light brown baby bear, up against the Inexplicable for the first time and disliking it. Its master was feeding it on grapes, and would keep it for show in the villages. He said he often trapped bears down by the river. I believe the existence of such animals in this country is held to be doubtful now, and they will very soon be extinct: but they had survived at any rate until 1929.

We bought provisions at Kartaba, and followed the new road which was traced but not yet finished: there were gangs of workmen, and a few pioneering cars. Far below the river ran in its deep wooded bed between steep sides, careless of Progress above, and singing to itself its ancient song. We would go down to it, I said, and follow its windings.

But this was the last thing Najm meant to do. Having once got on to a civilised road he intended to stick to it. He denied the existence of any other with bland exasperating obstinacy. I became gloomy with annoyance. A river without a way along its banks is a monstrosity; a thing that has no business to exist

except in uncivilised continents like Patagonia. I told Najm so. Whatever happened we would go off this main road fit only for the feet of French officials. They were making it. Let them walk along it.

On the long spur that divides the plain of Jubeil from the Adonis valley we broke away. By sheer good luck we found ourselves upon the pilgrim track. A temple or palace had stood on our left hand; its court could still be traced by squared white stones. The track led between two rocks with figures carved upon them, stiff hieratic attitudes opposing each other in the white sunlit solitude of stones: from here Phœnician priests or princes looked down on their city of Byblos below.

There is good water near by: the 'Ain ed-Dilb or Sycamore Spring, where we sat in the shade, and the people with their cattle came to drink and talk, and brought us grapes. We retrieved Majid who had lost himself during the discussion. 'May Allah make him a widower,' said Najm, who considers this a mild and unimportant infliction, not grave enough to come under the heading of curses, of which he disapproves.

In the heat of the afternoon we set off again. We kept to the old cobbled causeway which runs along the heights above the stream through small unvisited villages, and ever in sight of the sea. And in the late afternoon we reached the coast and its traffic and, leaving Majid with the mules to follow after, returned by way of the twentieth century in a car.

THE HELLBLASTS.

BY WILFRID TREMELLEN.

IF I had not gone to winter sports at Wengen that year, Hiram's ski would not have come off—not in my presence anyway; and if Hiram had not shed a ski, I should have missed hearing a rather ingenious and rather dramatic spy story. But Hiram *did* lose a ski, and I not only listened to the story, but was also an eye-witness of the final act. For this spy episode, though it began on the Western Front in 1917, had its rightful conclusion in Switzerland thirteen years later.

It was Boxing Day, and there were only four of us on the trip (you know those Christmas festivities at Swiss hotels; they always spin out until past midnight). We left Wengen at ten o'clock, took an almost empty sport-train up to the Scheidegg, hired a guide, put on our skis, and began the long climb up to the Mannlichen.

There is nothing much to see while you are actually climbing. There is nothing much you *can* see. The dazzling whiteness of the snow on the slopes ahead prevents the eye from taking in an outline of any kind. It is like—like white darkness, if you know what I mean. You go up and up through the keen air, as blind as a bat; and it is only when you halt for a breather and turn round to see how much smaller the Scheidegg Hotel looks now than it did before, that there is any relief from the aching whiteness.

We made our way up in single file, traversing, of course, as the gradient was pretty steep. First went the guide—rather slowly. It had snowed the night before, and the little man had hard work stamping down the fleecy stuff with his ski to make a firmer path for us who came after. Behind him was Miss Threddle, and she followed him far too closely. She would. Loud clacks, which every now and then resounded down the mountain-side, indicated that she was fouling his ski with hers. Just like Miss Threddle; always treading on somebody's corns. No, I wasn't fond of that red-headed lass. I had danced with her the night before—the scurviest trick Paul Jones had ever played on me.

Colonel Threddle came next, and I followed him at a distance, because Hiram, who was close behind me, had a habit of mimicking

the remarks of his daughter, and I did not want the old boy to hear. In a way I quite liked the Colonel, but if ever I undergo a court-martial, I hope that somebody else will be president. A little dour. Hardly the kind of man to wave to children from trains.

Hiram brought up the rear—Hiram C. Rigley, who came from one of the milder cities of the Middle West. He was the one who lost his ski.

It happened while we were halting to look back at the view. The clip at the back of his heel-strap flicked open. It was the third time it had happened that morning. 'Darn it,' he grunted. He kicked his foot angrily out of the strapping—and stared with bulging eyes while his ski, sliding slowly at first, at length gathered speed and began an independent journey back to the Scheidegg Hotel, about two miles below. I stuck my sticks into the snow and held my sides, roaring with laughter.

That meant that the guide had to go back for it. Luckily there was a rest-hut about half a mile farther up. So Hiram put one arm round the Colonel's neck and the other round mine, and we moved slowly onwards. It would take the guide about three minutes to ski down to hotel-level, but well over an hour to return. However, each of us had his *lunch à emporter* in his rucksack.

That was how the four of us on Boxing Day of 1930, found ourselves eating hard-boiled eggs and slabs of cold veal in a lonely little hut 7,000 odd feet above sea-level. I don't know how we got on to the subject of war and espionage. All I remember is that while Miss Threddele was engaged in sweeping her eggshell tidily into a paper bag, she suddenly stopped, looked up, and made a really sensible suggestion.

'Father, why don't you tell them that spy story—the one Major White was so intrigued with?'

The Colonel seemed not at all keen—I had not expected him to be. He looked over to the door, opened it, and looked out, but it had begun to snow again, and big flakes came whirling into the hut.

'Do tell it to us, Father!'

'If that's a warr steurry, Colonel,' said Hiram, 'I'd most offly like to hear it.' And I added a plea of my own.

The Colonel lit a cigar. 'A lady who once heard that story, as good as called me a murderer,' he remarked grimly.

'Oh, but you were so clever, Father!' exclaimed Miss Threddele, ready with doubtful oil.

‘Do tell us, Colonel!’

Colonel Threddle settled himself down on the table; his daughter had the only chair—Hiram and I were sitting on the floor with our backs to the wall. He was a big, slow, methodical sort of man, was the Colonel, with a nearly bald head and a rather grim face. He looked as if he had had some great disappointment in life. I guessed that he was not good at making personal contacts, and that his natural self-display had been repressed. He was brainy, I knew, but he did not usually talk much, and I wondered how he would tell a story. He coughed a little uneasily and began.

‘First I must tell you about a very pretty lady who used to manufacture a cheese with a very evil odour.

‘Madame Chanteuil, who was a well-known figure in our sector of the Line, was the proprietress of an estaminet called *Les Trois Poules*. She was a young woman of about thirty, and she not only ran the inn herself, but had also set up a kind of factory for this cheese. She called it *pique-aux-dents*. It is the kind they make in Provence.

‘That was where she originally came from, I believe. Anyhow, she was quite different from the other women in the district. They were rather dreadful—you know, sabots, slovenliness and stupidity, with the village dung-heap for their natural background. She was an extremely attractive woman—would have kept her end up anywhere.

‘This cheese of hers was a huge success. Battalion messes used to send men to line up for the stuff; generals would not dine without it, and so on. And all this in spite of its most unholy aroma; it used to be called—no, never mind. It was made of goats’ milk and white wine, and Mme Chanteuil, who kept half a dozen goats in the field at the back of her estaminet, used to turn out the stuff in wholesale quantities.

‘Don’t ask me how she managed all this single-handed; I can’t tell you. All I know is that I never once saw her really idle, and that if she had nothing better to do, she would be darning socks for one of her favourites among the local subalterns. She was like that—a cheery word for everybody, and help if he needed it. I only once saw the smile leave her face, and that was when someone mentioned her husband. He was understood to have been an N.C.O. in a Chasseur regiment. She was put down for a widow.

‘You can imagine that in the fighting area anyone so attractive would not be without admirers. Mme Chanteuil had dozens of

'em. *Les Trois Poules* was only a couple of miles behind the Line, you see. One young gunner officer, with about ten of his men, was billeted on her—which meant that he had the use of her parlour. His name was—er—Smith, and he and I got on rather well later on. Not at first, though. When I went there for a drink, Mme Chan-teuil used sometimes to invite me to sit down in that parlour, and I soon began to feel that he did not like that.

'Often when I dropped in, I would find him sitting there staring at the fire, and from the anxious way he looked round when the door opened, I knew that I was not exactly welcome. He was only nineteen, poor lad, and it turned out that he was head over heels in love with her. Still, as I was of Field rank, he could not very well object to my presence—even though the parlour was, in a sense, his billet. In the end he got used to me—I suppose he thought that I was too old to be a serious rival. Sometimes he and I used to—'

'Somebody outside!' Hiram suddenly interrupted.

There was a sound of voices and of heel-clips being flicked back, and the door opened.

'Any room for us?' asked a cheery voice.

'Come right in!' Hiram scrambled to his feet, and by bundling armfuls of our skis and sticks into a corner, contrived more sitting space against the wall.

The new-comer looked quite young in his peaked ski-ing-cap, but when he took it off to brush the snow away, I saw that his hair was already greying. He was followed by a pretty girl I guessed to be his wife. His blue eyes, wandering over us, met Colonel Thred-dle's, seemed for a moment puzzled, and then recognised.

'Good Lord, sir! I didn't expect to see you here!'

Colonel Thredde slid quickly from the table. His astonishment seemed ridiculously out of proportion to the magnitude of the coincidence. He positively gaped.

'Why, Hallett? Extraordinary! Most extraordinary! Why, I—'

'Had your lunch yet?' Hiram asked the girl. He was on his knees, brushing away at the lumps of ice that clung to her goat-hair over-socks.

She laughed, unwinding her muffler. 'Yes, we were rather piggy. We had eaten ours before it began to snow.—Oh, how do you do, Colonel! Yes, we thought we would try Wengen this year.'

'A cigarette?' asked Hiram, when we all knew each other. 'Right! And now you'd better wipe that snow out of your ears, because the Colonel here is telling us a spy steurry, and I'm just crazy to hear him go on. There's a warr; there's a kind of cheese, that stinks real bad; and there's a hundred-per-cent. French dame, a real beaut, bottled at the château. I might add that if Hiram C. Rigley hadn't cast a ski, you would have missed it all. Shoot, Colonel!'

The Colonel looked as though he would rather not, but before he could say anything, his redoubtable daughter had begun on a more adequate synopsis of previous chapters.

'—and there's a silly young fool of a subaltern in love with her,' she wound up. 'Now, Father!'

Colonel Thredde looked helplessly from Captain Hallett to his wife, and back again to Hallett, until I began to scent a mystery.

'Hallett, I—er—was telling of the incident at *Les Trois Poules*, which—er—doubtless, as a gunner, you will have heard about.'

For a moment Hallett's eyes flickered, and then he smiled, an open, friendly sort of smile.

'Do go on, sir!'

'Perhaps, then, you will—er—help me out with some of the technical details?'

'Certainly, sir; carry on!'

'Well—er—oh, yes, the point was this. I was Intelligence Officer at the time. I remember I had been working hard all night on some important matter at our new Brigade H.Q., and I was walking back to my billet. It was about half an hour after dawn. The night had been comparatively quiet as far as artillery activity was concerned. I was enjoying the brisk walk through the freshness of the morning, when suddenly the air was filled with the whine of shells, and there followed a series of shattering explosions behind me. I realised that this was a bombardment of no ordinary intensity, and ran for cover.

'As I crouched there with bits of wreckage pelting down from the sky, it seemed to me that the world was coming to an end. And then the *furor* ceased as suddenly as it had begun. I crawled out of my ditch with my ears still singing, and looked at my watch. It had lasted two minutes only. In that short time, though, as I soon found when I retraced my steps, our Brigade H.Q. had been utterly destroyed. And that H.Q. had only moved in on the previous afternoon.

'That was only the beginning. The next day, half an hour after dawn again, a large ammunition dump camouflaged from aerial observation by all the most cunning devices of our experts, was suddenly subjected to an intensive bombardment by every long-range German gun on the sector—for just two minutes. The dump blew up, of course, and a whole district was blasted by the explosion. The loss in men and material you can imagine for yourselves.

'On the third day, just about half an hour after dawn again, a convoy of A.S.C. lorries proceeding to the railhead to unload two trains that had arrived during the night, found that there was nothing to unload—or rather, that everything had already been unloaded. After two minutes of concentrated bombardment the food and ammunition intended for ten thousand men had gone up in smoke.

'On the fourth morning it was a recently emplaced battery of heavies that was destroyed; on the fifth, it was a tank park; and, on the sixth, a Corps Headquarters, at which the Commander-in-Chief had spent the night, was blown to smithereens only twenty minutes after his departure.

'And always the bombardments began half an hour after dawn; always they lasted exactly two minutes; and always they involved the concentration of every long-range German gun within range on what was for the moment the most favourable target in the sector. Obviously some spy on our side of the Line was sending information to the German artillery commander—and that information was detailed, accurate, and up-to-the-minute.

'On the seventh day nothing happened, except that the whole district joined in a panic-stricken hunt for spies. Pigeons were shot at sight, wireless installations were sought in the most unlikely places, and Air Force machines thundered up and down the Line challenging any German scout that ventured within five miles of it.

'It made no difference. On the eighth morning, punctually half an hour after dawn, an avalanche of high-explosive shells descended on our new Brigade H.Q., and the Brigadier was killed as well as most of his staff.

'Have you ever poked the end of your walking-stick into an ants' nest? This last bombardment had a very similar effect. There was general consternation throughout our sector. Everyone from the Staff downwards had become nervy. Yet no precautions could be taken because no one had the slightest idea where the next bombardment would occur.

'The deadly concentration which characterised them earned them a name of their own. Somebody with a leaning towards literal translation from the French named them "Hellblasts," and the term caught on.

'The situation was serious in the extreme. It was obvious, to the most thick-headed of privates even, that treachery was at work—on our own side of the Line. And that knowledge caused more damage in loss of *moral* than the actual shells cost in lives. This sort of thing, if continued, would disorganise the whole army.

'The new brigadier, as soon as he had made some order out of the chaos, sent for me and gave me the job of solving the mystery.

'You must understand me. This concentrated shelling of one target was in no way similar to the enemy's normal artillery activity. It was a case of all the battery-commanders on that section of the German front suddenly receiving simultaneous orders to abandon whatever job they were on for the moment, to switch on to this new and extremely favourable target, and to concentrate on it for two minutes.

'If the Germans had obtained a local supremacy in the air, the thing would have been easily understandable. In our own Air Force, for instance, if an airman spots a "specially favourable target" (officially defined as the concentration of at least 1,000 infantry, or 200 cavalry, or an entire battery of artillery) he sends down by wireless what is known as an "LL Call" giving the map reference of the target, and every available gun at once switches on to it. But, as I have said, so far were the Germans from having supremacy in the air, that they hardly dared venture near the Line.

'Well, having obtained my portfolio as sleuth-hound-in-chief, I betook myself to *Les Trois Poules* and settled myself down in front of a pleasant fire of sprawling white wood-ash in Mme Chanteuil's parlour. It was a delightful old wainscoted room with a permanent smell of wood-smoke and groceries, and there was a ponderous old grandfather that I would have given a lot to possess. It had a slow, solemn tick that was most soothing. On the whole I strongly sympathised with Mme Chanteuil's unwillingness to remove to a safer area.

'She came in in her usual cheery way, bringing me a bottle of *vin blanc*, half a yard of French bread, and one of her celebrated cheeses. She chided me for looking over-tired and poured out the wine herself. "*Buvez ça, monsieur ; ça vous fera du bien.*" I had known her for months, but her manner would have been just the

same if I had been a complete stranger. She had the air of one who had lived with men all her life.

'I wanted to be alone to think over my problem, but there was a lot of semi-ritual chatter to be got over first. Where would the next hellblast fall? Where indeed! *Ah! Les sales bosches!* She stood there opposite me, mending a khaki sock, I remember, and it was some time before I got rid of her.

'When she was gone, I turned my chair round to the fire again, spread my map on my knees, and began wrestling with the great problem.'

Colonel Threddle glanced over to Captain Hallett and his wife. 'Now as we are not all gunners—or gunners' wives,' he remarked, tapping his pockets for matches, 'there will be one or two points that need explanation. For instance, a gunner does not necessarily have to be able to see his target in order to plant a shell on it. He can aim by map, and it suffices if he knows the exact position of his target on the map. He opens fire on a pinpoint. Hallett, explain to the assembled company what a pinpoint is!'

Hallett grinned and took his pipe out of his mouth. 'Um, well, a pinpoint is a small spot on the map the size of a—of a—'

'Pinpoint,' suggested Miss Threddle crisply.

'Thank you, Miss Threddle! The size of a pinpoint. Um, you see, an artillery map is first of all divided into big squares A,B,C, and so on (capitals). Each of 'em is divided into smaller squares, which are numbered 1,2,3, and so on. Each of these is again divided into four lettered squares, a,b,c, and d (small letters). Now if you divide the sides of one of these small-lettered squares into ten units, you can define the position of any point inside the square by saying that it is located at a point, say four units along and three units up.

'Supposing that the gunner is told to fire at a pinpoint G5c3.4. He takes his map, finds the big square G, and within it the smaller square 5. The third quarter of that square will be the square c. He counts three-tenths horizontally, and four-tenths vertically, as in graphs, and there he is. Actually, what is called a pinpoint on the map represents a square of land measuring fifty yards by fifty. That's near enough when you have plenty of shells to waste and a good target.'

'Thank you, Hallett. Now I can get on. Where was I? Ah, yes! Now the spy, whoever he was, kept his eyes open during the day (or else received the information from someone else), and

when he discovered a favourable target, worked out its pinpoint on the map, and somehow contrived to communicate it across the Line.

'Now a single pinpoint, such as K4d4.7 or C9a6.2, is not a lengthy message to transmit, but you must remember that every officer and man on the sector was on the look-out. Any ordinary device, such as flashlight signals at night, or ground-strips that could be seen from the air, was out of the question. Pigeons and wireless also seemed to be ruled out. And yet every twenty-four hours somebody of devilish cunning went round the countryside, picked out what was for the time being our most vital target, and communicated its pinpoint to the Germans on the other side of the Line. It is easy to guess what happened then. The receiver of the intelligence sent an urgent telephone message to all batteries within range, and the two-minute intensive bombardment began. As this always took place shortly after dawn, I assumed that the information was received either during the night or very early in the morning. And now where was I? Oh, yes! I was sitting before the fire in Mme Chanteuil's parlour.

'It was while I was there that an infantryman brought me a piece of information such as I had asked all company commanders to supply me with. A German aeroplane flying at a low altitude had passed over his part of the trenches that morning; and the morning before it had been heard to cross the Line at another point farther east. The ground mist had prevented detailed observation, but the machine had crossed over at such an early hour that the sender of the message felt that it must have taken off from its aerodrome in the dark. On both occasions it was heard flying back over no-man's-land after being over our territory only two minutes.

'Here was my first clue—quite a promising one. It might be that there was no spying at all, and that the targets were directly observed from the air. I knew that this was very unlikely, but I could soon see if it were feasible. When the man had gone, I searched in my pocket for a piece of paper, intending to jot down the pinpoint of that morning's hellblast. But finding no suitable piece, I stepped over to Mme Chanteuil's fine old carved bureau and soon routed out a stray fragment. The pinpoint where the disaster had taken place was, let us say, D8d7.6. I set it down on the paper. Then, taking the map on my knees again, I examined it to see whether the aeroplane observed that morning could

possibly have crossed the trenches at the point stated and flown to D8d7.6 and back, all in two minutes. Working it out on the paper, I found that it would have had to travel at a rate of 543 m.p.h. Quite impossible. I tossed the paper aside.

'Yet the clue seemed good. I leaned down to pick it up again, to make sure I had made no mistake in my working. Then I found to my great astonishment that all my calculations had disappeared from the surface of the paper! There was the first entry, the pinpoint D8d7.6, but nothing below it!

'At first I thought that my half-bottle of *vin blanc* had gone to my head. Then, looking more closely, I saw that the entry D8d7.6 was not in my writing after all—that the "7" was formed with a small tick in the continental manner.'

'Gee, Colonel!' broke in Hiram enthusiastically. 'You've sure got me all worked up!'

'And then,' resumed the Colonel quietly, 'I turned over the paper and found my own pinpoint on the other side, with my calculations below it.

'Knowing, and liking, Mme Chanteuil as I did, you can guess that I was pretty well bowled over at first. I remember sitting there bolt upright, staring in front of me like a fool. I simply could not believe the thing. That our Mme Chanteuil, known up and down the Line as the queen of good sorts, should have anything to do with this spy business seemed too utterly absurd. But there was the proof in front of my eyes.

'As soon as I had collected myself, the first thing I did was to get myself billeted at *Les Trois Poules*. The next was to telephone to the nearest aerodrome. I wanted photographs of the estaminet taken from the air.

'Obviously the actual spying—the devilishly skilful choice of targets, I mean—could only be done by a person who travelled round the countryside. Madame's part, I took it, was to communicate the selected pinpoint to the Germans. I reasoned that it must be those aeroplanes heard passing over the front-line trenches that collected the information. I supposed that each morning they slipped over the Line as soon as it was light, picked up some visible signal arranged by her at the estaminet (probably they photographed it), flew back, and telephoned the pinpoint to the artillery H.Q., who ordered the bombardment. My problem was: how did Madame manage to convey a message containing five characters to the man in the aeroplane?'

'Semafore!' suggested Hiram promptly.

'Chalk marks,' said I vaguely. 'Somewhere not visible from the ground—on top of a dovecote, perhaps.'

Miss Threddle smiled her superior smile, and Captain Hallett grinned and tried to nudge his pretty little wife into making an answer.

'I thought of those things at the time,' said the Colonel; 'as well as other possibilities suggested by the circumstances. But I found I was underrating Madame's ingenuity. No; it was a little walk that I took in the field at the back of the estaminet that gave me the clue.

'I had just received the aerial photographs that I had ordered. They revealed nothing in the slightest degree suspicious, and in my disappointment I was taking turns up and down amongst the goats. While I was cudgelling my brains for some solution, my boot clinked against something hidden in the grass. Absent-mindedly, I turned back for it; it was an empty tin can. A couple of the goats were annoying me with their bleating, and, still with my mind elsewhere, I worked the toe of my boot beneath that can, and with a jerk of the leg, sent it flying towards them. The unfortunate brutes seemed to have got their ropes entangled and were in a sad state of bewilderment. Then I noticed that these two were tethered to the same peg, while the other three each had a peg of its own. I wondered why.

'And while I was wondering why, the solution to the mystery suddenly came to me. Something—I suppose it must have been my unconscious mind at work on the job—made me think of the pinpoint of that morning's bombardment, D8d7.6—the letter d occurring twice.

'I got Mme Chanteuil out of the house on some pretext and then went back into the field. I walked methodically up and down that field in straight lines until I had covered the whole of it. I had a notebook in my hand with a rough plan of its shape sketched out. I was looking for pegs in the grass—pegs that you could tether a goat to. Whenever I found one, I marked its position on the plan, and when I had finished, I found that the pegs formed a horse-shoe—or, rather, twenty-six of them did, and within it was a single row of ten pegs. *Now* have you got it?'

We all stirred. 'I have, I think,' I ventured after a pause. 'But will you tell me first whether the goats were of different colours?'

The Colonel nodded, but did not smile. I fancy he was just a little piqued that his mystery was, for me at any rate, no longer a mystery.

'You've got it. I see you have. Yes, one of the goats was black, another white, and the other three distinctively bi-coloured. The one——'

'Gee!' began Hiram protestingly. 'But I don't see——'

'Now I've talked enough,' Colonel Threddle interrupted, treading out the end of his cigar. 'Suppose you explain the rest.' And he nodded to me.

'Well, Mme Chanteuil's object was to signal a pinpoint to an aeroplane flying over her estaminet. A pinpoint consists of five characters—G5c3.2, for instance. She kept five goats of different colouring, one to represent each of the characters. The black goat, let us suppose, always stood for the capital letter, the white goat for the numbered square that followed it, the goat with the black forequarters represented the small-lettered square, and so on.

'Then she had in her field a horse-shoe of twenty-six pickets representing the alphabet, and a line of ten, representing the numbers 1-10. She had only to tether the right goats to the right pickets to be able to signal any given pinpoint. The tether-rope, of course, rendered each goat clearly traceable to its own peg. The German pilot photographed the disposition of the pegs, flew back, had the plate developed, deciphered the pinpoint, and telephoned the artillery. The artillery——'

'But what did you do with——?' began Mrs. Hallett, and then stopped—I think because her husband nudged her.

'Yes,' persisted Hiram; 'what did happen to that dame in the end, Colonel?'

'Well, first I had to make sure that it really was she who was doing the signalling. So next morning I got up early, well before it was light, and from my window I kept my eye on the goat-field. Almost before I had finished dressing, Madame came out. I slipped down and caught her red-handed. She had a slip of paper in one hand and was tugging at the tether of the black goat with the other. She made no fuss; she knew at once that I had guessed her secret. I caught hold of her wrists and dragged her into the house. Then I pushed her into a cupboard and turned the key. I had decided what I was going to do—thought it out in the night.

'After examining my map, I made another visit to the field, and when I had finished there, I came and let her out.

"I have altered the position of the goats," I told her. "When the German bombardment begins, it will destroy, not the target you have selected, but this estaminet, *Les Trois Poules*."

"Although you have been working for the enemy, you have been good to many of our English soldiers. I will give you this choice. You may decide yourself whether I hand you over to the French authorities (in which case you will certainly be shot), or whether I leave you locked up in this cupboard to be destroyed with your house."

Just then there came a deafening roar as the German aeroplane swept overhead, and we both knew that within half an hour *Les Trois Poules* would be in ruins. Madame Chanteuil turned a little pale, but remained quite calm and chose at once.

"Monsieur, I choose to perish in my house; it is better so."

I went off to warn the men billeted in the house of what was going to happen, and came back to her with a bottle of brandy from the bar. But she shook her head. I left her smoking one of my cigarettes—far calmer than I was.

Soon afterwards the guide returned with Hiram's ski, and we started back for Wengen. Captain Hallett and I were the last to begin the long run down; my curiosity had prompted me to catch him alone, so I feigned a tight heel-strap.

"I wonder if you would answer a stranger's very impertinent question?"

"Try me!" He thrust his sticks into the snow, capped them with his gloves, and felt for a cigarette.

"Were you the officer billeted at *Les Trois Poules*?"

He nodded, smiling. "And sometime admirer of Mme Chanteuil."

"She must have been an interesting woman."

"She was—and not quite so infamous as you might think." He lighted our cigarettes. "You see, they had shot her husband, for cowardice, I think, and—well, she no longer saw eye to eye with the Allied Powers. She was getting her own back. She was quite frank about it to me. It was a kink in her mind, I admit now, but as she made me see it, it seemed almost justifiable—I was only nineteen then, remember."

"You saw her—after the Colonel locked her up?"

His blue eyes gazed reflectively down at the Scheidegg Hotel, a mere matchbox in the distance. "Yes. I made her swear blind to give it all up, and set her free."

QUEEN CAROLINE AND CHIEF JUSTICE ELLEN-
BOROUGH: A MATTER OF HISTORY.

BY SIR ALGERNON LAW.

FROM time to time the student of history and biography comes with a feeling of relief upon a work which in treating of a subject of violent controversy in past days approaches it with a firm determination to cast aside all previously acquired impressions, to test the truth of charge and counter-charge and to be ready to recognise the possibility that some of the persons drawn into the vortex of the discussions may, whatever part their position may have called upon them to play, have yet acted without bias or unworthy aim. This resolve demands of an historian as his main qualification the rigid avoidance of the attribution to men or women of any motive which cannot be clearly proved. Unfortunately books continue to be produced running in the old ruts and showing neither original research nor strict impartiality. The following pages give an example of this unhappy method of writing, as displayed in Sir Edward Parry's *Queen Caroline*.

Caroline, 'the Consort of King George the Fourth,' was a daughter of the Duke of Brunswick and of his Duchess, a sister of King George the Third. Like most German princes of his time, the Duke had a mistress who was openly acknowledged as such. Caroline, was, therefore, early aware of the hazards of princely marriages, especially when for reasons of State princes accepted as brides ladies they had never seen before. Kings sometimes rejected proffered brides as not up to sample. For instance, Henry VIII promptly set aside the 'Flanders mare' whom he had accepted on the warranty of a too flattering portrait. But in this case George III was selecting his niece to be his daughter-in-law and his son had no choice in the matter. Hearing that such a project was in contemplation, Sir Arthur Paget, His Majesty's Minister at Berlin, one of a famous family of fighters and lady-fanciers, reported that Caroline was quite unsuited for the position of Princess of Wales. But the despatch which might have turned the scale against the marriage arrived too late to stop the match, and Lord Malmesbury was sent to escort her to England. He

found to his horror that she was an undisciplined hoyden with a marked dislike for soap and water. He tried to train her to be more ladylike in her ways and by broad hints induced her for once actually to 'wash all over.'

Three weeks after these ablutions and after a long land journey and a sea voyage, the Princess arrived in England and met her intended husband for the first time. He bowed, he kissed her, then called for brandy. Can there be any doubt as to the cause? The Prince was fastidious, and coming into close contact with her felt queasy. It must have been from that moment that she became physically repulsive to him.

Where the Prince, his friends and his supposed friends are concerned, Sir E. Parry is profuse in invective. He does not even spare the almost saintly Sir Samuel Romilly. The marriage might have proved the Prince's salvation if at the start there had been the slightest sympathy between bridegroom and bride. As it was, the wedded life of this ill-assorted couple lasted just long enough to bring about the principal object of the alliance: a young life was at last interposed between the Throne and the ultimate succession of a foreigner, for neither the King's younger sons nor his nephew William Duke of Gloucester had any legally recognised children. But the Prince of Wales's abhorrence of his wife was so great that she had to set up a separate establishment and to live for the next ten years principally at Blackheath.

Towards the end of this period the Princess took a step, which to say the least, was open to misconception. Rumours got about that the Princess had adopted an infant and that it was in reality her own son, the child of an illicit amour. They reached the ears of the Prince, who also heard that his brother Edward Duke of Kent was privy to the scandal. He sent for him and taxed him with concealing from him information of such grave importance. The Duke thereupon made a frank disclosure. To make a long story short, Colonel Sir John Douglas and his wife, who had been on very friendly terms with the Princess but had quarrelled with her, were ready to swear that the rumours were true; and Lady Douglas declared that the Princess had admitted their truth and had moreover confessed to pursuing an immoral course of life.

The stage is now reached in Sir E. Parry's narrative where he introduces statements and comments which have no justification in the facts. Historically speaking, they evince an uncritical attitude which, before going further, may be illustrated by various

instances of carelessness in making positive assertions on matters in which verification is easy.

For example, he says that Mrs. Howard, the well-known subject of Pope's flattering epigram, was made Countess of Suffolk by George II; whereas, as a matter of fact, she became so in virtue of her husband's succession to an earldom created in 1603, and there is no conclusive evidence that she was the King's mistress.

Another surprising statement is that the Duke of Brunswick was a subject of the King of Prussia.

Yet another is that 'in June of that year (1806), the new Whig Government impeached Lord Melville,' whereas he was impeached by the House of Commons as the result of the Report of the Statutory Commission of Naval Enquiry. Pitt was alive and in office, and Melville resigned, as soon as the decision to impeach was seen to be inevitable.

'About this time,' according to Sir E. Parry, the Prince 'was taking a great interest in the case of an adopted child of Mrs. FitzHerbert, *whose* [*sic*] *parents* were no longer desirous that a young girl should be brought up in such a household. . . . In the end Lord and Lady Hertford were made guardians of the child, and they allowed her to stay with Mrs. FitzHerbert.'

These supposed facts are given as proof of the subservience—the illegal and wicked subservience—of the House of Lords to the Prince. What are the real facts? The child's parents, Lord and Lady Hugh Seymour, had both *died in* 1801, and Lord Hertford, Lord Hugh's eldest brother, had the best title to the legal guardianship. Why the Seymours allowed their child to be with Mrs. FitzHerbert is, I believe, an unsolved mystery. After all, Lord Hertford only continued what the parents began.

To return to the charges against the Princess. Steps were taken by the Prince to lay before the King all the information which had been collected. The accusations against the Princess were exceedingly grave; they amounted to a charge of high treason. What was the King to do? It was evident that strict enquiry was necessary. He rightly decided to turn to the Keeper of his conscience, as the phrase goes, his Chancellor, Thomas Lord Erskine, the famous advocate; and a Commission was issued under the Royal Sign-Manual in the following words:

'Whereas . . . Thomas Lord Erskine our Chancellor has this day laid before us an Abstract of certain declarations touching the

conduct of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales, we do hereby authorise, empower, and direct, the said Thomas &c., our right trusty &c. George John Earl Spencer, one of our principal Secretaries of State, our &c., W. Windham, Lord Grenville, First Commissioner of our Treasury and our &c. Edward Lord Ellenborough our Chief Justice, to hold pleas before ourself, to enquire into the truth of the same and to examine upon oath such persons as they see fit touching and concerning the same, and to report the result of such examination.

‘ Given at our Castle of Windsor on 29th May in the 46th year of our reign.’

It will be noted that the duty imposed upon the Commissioners was to enquire and to report. They were not to decide anything, they did not constitute a tribunal. The object clearly was to find out whether any further steps were needed, just as a firm of family solicitors might do to-day in similar circumstances. Three days later depositions were taken from Sir John and Lady Douglas in the presence of the four Commissioners; on the 6th, 7th and 8th of June, depositions were made by certain of the Princess's servants, on the 7th by Sophia Austin, the actual mother of William Austin, the adopted and the alleged child of the Princess; on the 25th by the apothecaries (the medical attendants on Her Royal Highness and her household); on July 3 by her physician, Sir Francis Millman, and on the same day by Mrs. Hester Lisle, a lady who lived with the Princess. On the 14th of that month, the Commissioners reported as follows after summarising the matters referred to them :

‘ The most material of these allegations into the truth of which we have been directed to enquire, being thus far supported by the oath of the parties from whom they proceeded, we felt it to be our duty to follow up the enquiry by the examination of such other persons as we judged best able to afford us information as to the facts in question. We thought it beyond all doubt that in the course of the enquiry many particulars must be learnt which would necessarily be conclusive on the truth or falsehood of these declarations: so many persons must have been witnesses to the appearance of an actual pregnancy, so many circumstances must have been attendant upon a real delivery; and difficulties so numerous and insurmountable must have been involved in any attempt to account for the infant in question as the child of another woman, if it had in fact been the child of the Princess, that we entertained a full and confident expectation of arriving at complete

proof, either in the affirmative or negative on this part of the subject. This expectation was not disappointed. We are happy to declare our perfect conviction that there is no foundation whatever for believing that the child now with the Princess of Wales is the child of Her Royal Highness, or that she was delivered of any child in the year 1802; nor has anything appeared to us to warrant the belief that she was pregnant in that year, or any other period within the compass of our enquiries.¹

But the Commissioners in reaching their main conclusion were met with

‘other particulars respecting the conduct of the Princess such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give rise to any unfavourable interpretations. From the various depositions and proofs annexed to this report, particularly from the examination of Robert Bidgood, William Cole, Frances Lloyd and Mrs. Lisle, your Majesty will perceive that several strong circumstances of this description have been positively sworn to by witnesses, who cannot, in our judgment, be suspected of any unfavourable bias, and whose veracity, in this respect, we have seen no reason to question:

‘On the precise bearing and effect of the facts thus appearing it is not for us to decide; these we submit to your Majesty’s wisdom; but we conceive it to be our duty to report on this part of the Enquiry as distinctly as on the former facts,—that as on the one hand, the facts of pregnancy and delivery are to our minds satisfactorily disproved; so on the other hand we think the circumstances to which we now refer, particularly those stated to have passed between Her Royal Highness and Captain Manby, must be credited until they shall receive some decisive contradiction, and if true are undoubtedly entitled to the most serious consideration. We cannot close this Report without humbly assuring your Majesty that it is on every account our anxious wish to have executed this delicate trust with as little publicity as the nature of the case would allow, and we entreat your Majesty’s permission to express our full persuasion that if this wish had been disappointed, the failure is not imputable to anything unnecessarily said or done by us all which is most humbly submitted to your Majesty.

(Signed) **ERSKINE**

SPENCER

GRENVILLE

ELLENBOROUGH.’

July 14, 1806.

¹ Here follows a statement of the evidence of the identity of the adopted child with the one born of Sophia Austin.

It will be seen that the enquiry was undertaken by order of the King to assist him to decide how he should deal with the grave accusations made against the Princess, which involved no less than a capital charge against her and her accomplices. It was not in any sense a trial, though the political opponents of the Government did their utmost to make it to appear so. Happily the Commissioners considered that there was no foundation for the main accusation. The evidence given in rebuttal introduced, however, other matters of serious import which they left to be dealt with by the King. The incidental statements thus elicited could not be ignored, and the course chosen by the King was to order that the papers should be sent to the Princess. There was some delay on the part of Lord Chancellor Erskine in carrying out the order, which was executed by him clumsily and inconsiderately.

Now Sir E. Parry contends that the Commissioners should have been content to dismiss Sir John and Lady Douglas's accusations as incredible. In his view these declarations on the face of them were unworthy of belief and the Commissioners were acting *ultra vires* in seeking or taking notice of any other evidence. In fact he follows the line adopted by two leaders of the opposition, Spencer Perceval and Lord Eldon, who constituted themselves the Princess's advisers and champions, or as Sir Edward oddly says, were 'retained' by her, a legal expression implying that the ex-Chancellor was acting as counsel and receiving a retaining fee for his services. But Sir E. Parry cannot rest upon the opinion formed by Perceval and Eldon as set forth in the Princess's answer to the Report; he imputes motives to the Commissioners of the basest kind.

Sir E. Parry maintains that if the Commissioners had brought their enquiry and their report to a close when they reached the conviction that the Douglasses' story was untrue 'the wretched business might have ended.' 'But,' says he, 'these four commissioners were the Prince's friends, and he would have been bitterly chagrined at such a result of this his first conspiracy against his wife's happiness and good name.' Of these two statements, the first as regards Lord Ellenborough at least is false and the insinuation founded upon it is abominable; the second is unjust to the Prince, who had not at the outset sought to collect evidence against his wife. There is no reason to suppose that Lord Spencer and Lord Grenville, two men of independent character who had held high office under Pitt's premiership, were *more* aware of the King's intention to appoint them to be parties to the enquiry

than was Lord Ellenborough who subsequently declared in the House of Lords :

'I found my name included ; but the subject of the enquiry, the intention to issue the Commission, and the Commission itself, were all profound secrets to me until I was called upon to discharge the high and sacred duty that upon me was imposed.' He was not a party man. He first stood for Parliament in 1801 upon becoming Attorney-General in Addington's Administration. In April of the following year he became Chief Justice of the King's Bench and a peer and privy councillor. He refused the Chancellorship in 1806, but soon after, upon the urgent and reiterated solicitation of Fox and Grenville, he joined the Coalition Cabinet known as 'All the Talents' (then carrying on war with France) in association with Addington, now Lord Sidmouth, both being considered to be the King's friends, and Sidmouth known to have been the bosom friend and political adherent of Pitt.

Pursuing his indiscriminating attack upon the Commissioners — 'Their difficulty,' says Sir E. Parry, 'was what to say about a matter which the Prince had taken up with much enthusiasm at a moment when at any time [*sic*] he might be Regent and make or mar their political future.' How a Regent, or a King for the matter of that, could, since the Revolution Settlement, make or mar the political future of a Chief Justice of the King's Bench who was also a peer, Sir Edward does not stop to explain.

Once more, it is a mis-statement when he calls the Report a 'decree,' a 'judicial act': a misrepresentation, when he accuses the commissioners of a 'cruel act' and of making the 'Princess's reputation a plaything of party politics.' It is merely fanciful when he pictures them 'at their wits end to know what to do,' and beginning 'to realise that for Ministers to be mixed up with a dirty intrigue of the Prince of Wales against his wife, based on the rambling falsehoods of a spiteful and blackmailing woman . . . would make them highly unpopular in the country and very contemptible in the eyes of their own party followers.' To this perverted view of their sentiments might be most justly applied the adjectives 'rambling' and 'contemptible.' The statements of the Douglasses were much too serious to be dismissed without further evidence. If the Commissioners had acted as Sir Edward Parry asserts that they were in duty bound to do, some other suspicious person might have now been contending that the King's Ministers were hushing up a grave Royal scandal so as to curry favour

with the King and to spite the Prince, etc. etc. But the author has not exhausted his stock of unworthy suggestions. He rushes on :

‘The difficulty here’ (he refers to the Douglasses’ depositions on June 1) ‘was that they represented the Prince in a sense, though they were reporting to the King, and a straightforward decision of that kind would be very displeasing to the Prince. They therefore proposed to adjourn the case, and call a few more witnesses and a few more depositions and see if anything turned up.’

In plain fact his insinuation is as unwarranted and as unworthy of a serious writer as those already quoted. He clinches the matter satisfactorily in his own eyes by saying : ‘No one could believe for a moment a word of Lady Douglas’s statement.’ Others, however, may think it rash in the extreme to assert that no one will believe a particular statement, however ludicrous, unfounded and self-contradictory it may be. The history of popular beliefs is full of such instances.

Here we have Sir Edward Parry, an experienced County Court Judge, apparently believing and expecting his readers to believe that the four Commissioners charged by the King to make an impartial enquiry, were all the while acting in the secret interests of the Prince and aiding and abetting the perjuries and calumnies of the Princess’s most wicked accusers. His Honour incautiously quotes Lord Campbell, the discredited biographer of his predecessors on the Woolsack and on the King’s Bench, as observing that in the examination of witnesses, only the effect of the evidence was given, not the questions and answers ; he has, however, missed the words which begin the passage ; they are : ‘All candid men believed that the investigation had been carried on with perfect fairness.’ In a note a few pages back in the volume continuing the passage, Campbell remarks : ‘Lord Ellenborough appears throughout the whole affair to have taken infinite pains to get at the truth, and to have been actuated by a most earnest desire to do impartial justice to all parties.’ There is, indeed, no reason to suppose that the Chief Justice’s colleagues were not equally animated by the most determined wish to sift the matter thoroughly without respect for persons and without regard to political considerations.

It remains to remark a strange and inexplicable omission on the part of Sir E. Parry. He makes no allusion to Mrs. Lisle’s evidence. The evidence of servants is often liable to be tainted

by suspicion ; gossip among them is a fertile source of idle tales which tend to warp the result of their observations and lead them to see evil in the comings and goings of their employers. But Mrs. Lisle was not in this category. She was a lady living in daily intercourse with the Princess. Her evidence seems unimpeachable. She spoke of the Princess's great friendship with Captain Manby, of his dining with her sometimes three or four times a week, and of her behaving towards him as a woman would who liked flirting and of acting as no properly behaved married woman would do. Moreover, Mrs. Lisle gave her evidence with obvious reluctance, and after the lapse of several years tried to dispute the accuracy of her deposition. She claimed to have written down to the best of her recollection as soon as her examination had been concluded the questions asked of her and her answers. Yet though she had set down among other questions what appears to have been a vital one, she had not appended her answer. In the end neither she nor anyone else ventured to contest the definite declaration of Lord Ellenborough in which he was supported by all his three colleagues, as to the accuracy of the record of her evidence.

Enough has been here written to warn readers of *Queen Caroline* that the author is not a safe guide to the history of her period. In his enthusiasm for the unhappy Queen he loses his sense of proportion and judicial care in testing statements, sifting facts and arriving at a calm and balanced judgment. Throughout the work on Queen Caroline the author accepts with touching fidelity all the calumnies of her adherents in the contemporary press. He ignores recently published works. He cannot have studied the diaries of Sylvester Douglas, Lord Glenbervie, who was a son-in-law of the celebrated Prime Minister, Lord North. Lady Glenbervie was personally selected by the Princess of Wales to be one of her ladies of the bedchamber in place of Lady Townshend, who had resigned. It is plain from the entries in these journals that he and his wife were under no illusions as to the character and conduct of her royal mistress. As early as October 16, 1801, he records on his wife's authority that the Princess would no longer allow Miss Hayman, one of her women, to live in the same building with her, because she had ventured to remonstrate with her for remaining closeted alone with a young man for some hours together in the evening and for similar acts of imprudence. On December 18, 1809, he notes that the Princess's affair with Lord Henry Fitzgerald, a married man, had become 'the universal talk. . . . It

is barefaced and disgusting.' On March 7, 1810, Glenbervie describes 'the manner in which the Princess treats her mother (the Duchess of Brunswick), the disrespect and contempt for her which she is at no pains to conceal . . . added to the scandalous publicity of her amour' with Lord Henry. The next day he records that her mother said to her: 'I see nothing of you now, I know nothing about or what you do, and I don't desire to know.' He adds: 'I believe however and so does Lady Glenbervie that what the Duchess chiefly meant was her daughter's conduct with Lord Henry.' On October 1, the lover

'has either resigned or been dismissed. . . . There are indications that Sir Harry Vane Tempest is intended for the vacant throne. He is handsome and profligate. . . . If Sir Harry Vane is really installed, the tone and society of Kensington will undergo a complete revolution. The reign of Lord Henry had its advantages and disadvantages. He is gentle, well-bred. . . . But on the other hand the Princess's unpardonable and foolish ingratitude to the Chancellor (Eldon) . . . in actively canvassing for Lord Grenville in the contest for the Chancellorship of Oxford is believed to have been owing to Lord Henry who sacrificed her interest and character to the hope of acquiring consequence with the Opposition party.' . . .

'I fear,' wrote Eldon's brother, Sir William Scott, 'the Princess will not find her account in the long run in giving up her old and tried friends for old and tried enemies.' 'She had made,' Glenbervie continues, 'many efforts to form an acquaintance with Sir Francis Burdett, but that is supposed to be more on account of his person than of his politics.' On October 7 he notes: 'Mrs. Lisle thinks that close siege has been laid to Sir Harry Vane.' On November 1 'Lady Glenbervie is terrified,' her husband says, 'lest the Princess should confide "the real case" with Lord Henry in direct terms to her, and is determined in some way or other to prevent this if she can.' The Princess said to her the other day: 'I am always very much improved by your waitings.' Lady G.: 'O Madam, that cannot be.' Princess: 'I mean in wit and knowledge. I do not mean in morality. Nobody can improve me in morality. I have a system quite my own on that head.' 'It is,' remarks Glenbervie, 'the system of Crebillon's novels or rather "*Les Bijoux Indiscrets*," or *Faublas*.'

The diarist on November 2, relates an incident showing the Princess's anxiety that her mother should not know of the visits of Ward, later Lord Dudley, a man noted for his love affairs. She

remarks to Lady Glenbervie, 'I suppose you saw I was impatient while my mother stayed. I had seen Ward coming this way . . . if he had come in, I meant to have told her that he was my Italian master.' He was often with the Princess in the morning. On such occasions Lady Glenbervie was never invited to luncheon, any more than she was during the reign of Lord Henry.

On November 24, Glenbervie recalls a past incident, when his wife was in waiting and there was no other company but Lord Henry and himself and when the Princess withdrew with Lord Henry and remained absent about an hour: first he returned with a book open in his hand, and soon afterwards the Princess followed and said 'Lord Henry has been reading to me.' He also mentions that before the 'Delicate Investigation' they were a party of five at dinner when the Princess placed Captain Manby next to her and directed all her looks, words and attentions to him at and after dinner and made him sit very close to her on the same sofa. After a time Manby withdrew and the moment he shut the door, she started up and said in broken English, 'Child cry,' and then hurried into the adjoining room which had communication with her garden and park, to which she had a private key. She was absent about three-quarters of an hour and returned with a look of confusion.

These entries tend in part to corroborate the evidence given at the Delicate Investigation not only by Mrs. Lisle but by some of the servants. They offer food for reflection to those who, like Sir E. Parry, are convinced of Queen Caroline's innocence.

It may be said that all this is gossip, and it may be asked why it never took the form of sworn testimony. On the other hand, can anyone be surprised that ladies and gentlemen were reluctant to come forward and to offer to give evidence? It would have been a disagreeable, thankless and unchivalrous proceeding and a task to be avoided at all costs. Actually Lord Glenbervie's evidence in the Queen's favour was of a qualified kind, when he attended as a witness on the occasion of the Divorce Bill, known as the Bill of Pains and Penalties.

THE SPANISH BED.

BY ELEANOR ELSNER.

IT was in the open market in Barcelona that I really got to know the old Spaniard, Jeronimo Carsas—that man who was supposed to be the greatest authority on period costumes in Europe. I had heard of him often, of course: had been told all about his antique shop down in the oldest part of the town—where he had the finest collection of historical uniforms, weapons, ceremonial robes and Court dresses outside a museum. I had even met him in his funny old barn-like warehouse in Palma, Majorca—where, however, he was a very different man! In Palma his activities centred round religious objects—plaster saints—wooden or metal angels—marble statues, sacred vessels—stained-glass windows and vestments. He tried hard, in Palma, to make me buy a saint, pressing on me a gigantic wooden statue of St. Mark.

‘Can you imagine me travelling round Europe with a wooden figure so large that it could not be got into a railway carriage?’ I asked him. ‘And what should I do with it, if ever I did get it home? it would scarcely go into the door of my house!’

‘You could give it to your Church, of course,’ he answered. ‘The Church is always glad to accept the figures of saints—the larger the better!’

I evaded the saint, and bought some old candlesticks, and then watched him palming off St. Mark on an unfortunate American who was told that it had come from the Royal Chapel in Madrid.

After the deal was completed we talked; I told him I was interested in period costumes and wished to see his collection.

‘Ah, but that is in Barcelona,’ he said, ‘not here—you must come there to see it—it is wonderful——’ and he launched out into vivid descriptions.

But some time elapsed before I had occasion to go to Barcelona, and then I met him quite by accident, prowling about the old market in the Rambla de Cataluña.

‘What are you doing here, Carsas?’ I asked him. ‘I see no saints, or cherubs, or old stained glass.’

‘You are the lady interested in period costumes,’ and he looked at me quickly. ‘I know why you are here now.’

'You have a wonderful memory,' I said, 'but why do you suppose I have come here especially now?'

'I suppose it has leaked out. I suppose everybody knows all about it—and I have been so careful!'

'What are you talking about, Carsas?' I asked. 'What has leaked out—and what have you been so careful about? I am here by accident, spending a couple of days waiting for a ship, and I am not buying antiques now. I only came up to the Market for interest, because I always go to markets in foreign towns!'

'Do you mean to say you are not interested any more in period costumes? that you do not know what is afoot here in Barcelona?'

My obvious ignorance reassured him, and he went on: 'There are a number of priceless old historical costumes here in Barcelona now, and I have reason to believe they will be sold to-day in the Market.'

'In the Market?' I demanded in amazement, 'but why in the Market? Why aren't they offered to dealers?'

'That might be dangerous, and difficult,' he said hesitatingly, 'and besides—these have no certificates—dealers would want proof that they were genuine.'

'Then they're stolen—of course!'

'Not exactly stolen—certainly not, Señora, but they have been acquired privately.'

I agreed to leave it at that, and refused to leave Carsas till we found them. At first he refused flatly to let me come with him—and it was only on my solemn promise, (first)—not to buy them myself, (second)—to tell no one anything about them till he had seen them, and (third)—not to be surprised at anything he said—that he consented to my accompanying him in his search. So we went up and down the Market for an hour, and all the time he was trying to get rid of me. He made all sorts of excuses—I was too well dressed—too obviously a foreigner—knew far too much about antiques—everybody would think I was a dealer in disguise!

'You know perfectly well I'm in old clothes. I *never* come to a foreign market in anything else, and the first time you saw me you took me for Spanish—it's no good, Carsas, I'm going to see those costumes—you won't get rid of me till we find them.'

'The owner will believe I've let a dealer into the secret,' he said mournfully, 'I'll have to say you're my wife—'

'Say anything you like, but let us find the costumes!'

At last a man beckoned to him, and they drew aside to talk, speaking very quickly, and in some Spanish dialect I did not understand, but I jogged Carsas's elbow and made him introduce his friend to me, and then I saw the quaintest, brownest, most humorous old face it has ever been my lot to meet. The old fellow smiled and bowed, and said he was honoured to meet the Señora—he was exactly like a Ribston pippin.

'The costumes are in a house at the other part of the town,' Carsas whispered, 'there is a car waiting if you *will* come—'

I *would* go, and we walked towards the strangest derelict of a car I have ever seen. It looked as if it had come straight off a scrap-heap, and was of the very oldest shape known, high at the back, and Carsas and I climbed up on to the seat, and hung on for bare life. It spluttered and spat for five minutes before it started, and then we were nearly jerked off. It went in spasms of smoking and hissing—it bumped unevenly over the stones, and every now and then it stopped dead. We were accompanied by a running, jeering crowd of children, who doubled up with laughter, and shouted ribald jibes which I, perhaps fortunately, could not understand.

When we had stopped and started for the third time the owner reassured us; 'We're nearly there—it isn't far now,' he shouted over his shoulder.

'Where did it come from—this car?' I gasped, when I could get my breath.

'He bought it in the Market ten days ago for one hundred pesetas,' Carsas told me, 'but it goes—you *would* come!'

At last we stopped with a more than usual suddenness, and the Pippin told us we were there.

'Go up to the first floor, very quietly—and I will come at once,' he told us. 'I must put the car away first.'

We went up, and entered an amazing room—all dark and panelled, with a high gilded ceiling—obviously an ancient aristocratic house. Carsas groped about, and found two candles, which he lighted. The room was full of chests and boxes, most of which had been opened, and out of which bundles of clothes protruded. They were all there—dresses, uniforms, robes, mantles, cloaks, furs, lace-brocade, gold trimmings, feathers. Carsas looked bewildered and I hazarded a question—'Whose were they? Where have they come from?'

'It is supposed that they are a portion of the Wardrobe of the Empress Josephine—they have come from an old Château in Provence,' Carsas answered, picking up one thing after another, and looking at it carefully. 'If they are genuine they are almost priceless, and they look real period pieces.' Meanwhile the Pippin came up, and immediately flung open the immense shutters and let a flood of light into the room. Then my eyes fell on what was to me the most beautiful thing in the room, a most superb old Spanish bed. Mahogany inlaid with pewter, which so fascinated me that I almost forgot about the costumes.

While I was examining the bed and admiring its lovely design and decoration, I could hear Carsas and the Pippin, and their astonishing bargaining—everything was disputed—every costume questioned—every uniform verified by old prints.

The Pippin had procured a book from an old library in Barcelona on period costumes, and he now triumphantly produced it, to prove that everything was genuine. 'The book is by Joseph Turquan,' he told us, 'and it describes minutely many of the actual costumes of the Empress.' I took it up while Carsas was examining the costumes, and I read some of it—first, descriptions of two dresses worn by Josephine during the days of the Consulate: '... a dress of white crepe entirely covered with little feathers from that bird called the toucan. These feathers were sewn on to the crepe and a tiny bead glued to the tip of each feather. With this dress Josephine wore in her hair a garland of toucan feathers sprinkled with beads and a complete set of rubies! Another dress of white crepe was sewn all over with rose-leaves, real pink rose-leaves that were tacked on to the dress just before she put it on. She could not sit down in it, and only wore it an hour or two.'

Meanwhile the bargaining went on apace.

'Are all the things here?' demanded Carsas. 'Have you shown them to anyone else? Am I the first to see them?'

The Pippin protested violently—no one else had seen them, and they were all here—he showed the papers and receipt for the boxes they had come in and drew our attention to the cases—all labelled 'fertiliser.'

'How did they get through the Customs?' I asked Carsas in French. 'How did you manage it?'

'We can manage it at times,' he said in Spanish, then whispering, 'don't speak French to me here—he thinks you're in the deal, you must keep it up now.'

It seemed that we might be there for hours, and I asked if we could have a cup of coffee while we examined the things.

'But I ordered a little *déjeuner* for Madame when I put the car away,' the Pippin said with a smile; 'I could not let the lady of Señor Carsas, my good customer for so many years, leave my house without some little refreshment—it will be here directly.'

I noticed he spoke in excellent French, and he had the most roguish twinkle in his eye—evidently he had summed up the situation quite accurately. I glared at Carsas. 'He has said I was his wife,' I thought—but he frowned back at me.

'She *would* come,' he said to the Pippin, 'so it's her own fault if she's tired.'

At that moment the *déjeuner* arrived, a huge tray with a cold chicken, salad, bread, butter, cheese, fruit—no salt, and one single knife, a large flask of wine, and three priceless old glasses to drink it from.

Carsas could not stop to eat. He took the leg of a chicken in one hand and a yard of bread in the other and walked about among the costumes choosing, disputing, threatening, cajoling, and gradually separating them all into different piles. Meanwhile I looked at the old book, and made a few extracts. What a woman Josephine must have been—the true Creole, with an intense love of luxury and colour, and no money sense at all. The Emperor paid her bills again and again, but she was always in debt! She had six hundred dresses at a time—and she never wore one for longer than three hours.

'The most interesting part of the day for her was when any milliners or jewellers came to show her their new creations,' Turquan wrote. 'She bought everything they showed her . . . jewels, laces, silks, satins, hats and turbans, feathers and furs, toilet articles, ornaments and all sorts of useless things. This good-natured Josephine was never able to resist temptation or to deprive herself of something which she did not really want. No one was ever more untidy than she was . . .'

When the crash came—and it was necessary to tell the Emperor—he was not really surprised, he knew his Josephine! But he insisted on being told the whole amount—he commanded his private Secretary—Bourrienne—to be sure to find out how much she really owed. 'She *must* tell the truth,' he said. 'I want to put a stop to all this extravagance and it must not begin again.'

But that was just what could not happen. Mme Bonaparte's

debts were enormous—she owed 1,200,000 francs to her tradespeople—225,000 francs for La Malmaison, and had purchased besides property to the amount of 1,195,000 francs, which she had not paid for. She refused absolutely to tell Bonaparte the whole amount, and would only confess to half: Bourrienne was aghast, but he could do nothing to move her. He implored her to confess the whole amount, but in the end had to submit, and only the sum of 1,600,000 francs was mentioned.

Bonaparte almost had a fit as it was when that sum was given to him, nevertheless he paid everything. Turquan described the scene:

‘The first Consul paid big bills and little bills. He paid the saddler, the coach-maker, the upholsterer, and the milliner, who had supplied thirty-eight new bonnets in the space of one month, herons’ plumes to the value of 1,800 francs and 800 francs worth of perfumes, etc., etc., etc.’

I stopped reading and began to examine the superb bed again. I had never seen such a beautiful specimen and I knew I must have it.

While I was looking at it the Pippin came up and smiled apologetically at me.

‘I’m sure your lady is fatigued,’ he told Carsas. ‘You ought to buy her a present—she has waited patiently here a long time—’

‘Buy her a present,’ Carsas said, with an angry look. ‘I didn’t want her to come. I can’t help it if she is tired.’

‘I don’t want a present from you,’ I said mischievously, ‘but I do want to buy something for myself!’

‘You promised you would buy nothing if I let you come. I want the whole of this collection myself.’

‘I don’t want any of the costumes. I’m not really interested in them—but I must have this old Spanish bed. I have absolutely fallen in love with it.’

Carsas looked as black as thunder—I knew he wanted the bed himself. I saw him look at it when the Pippin opened the shutters.

‘You could never afford that bed,’ he said. ‘It’s a museum piece.’

‘You don’t know what I can afford,’ I answered, ‘and I’m sure Monsieur here will let me buy it when he knows I’ve fallen in love with it. He knows how many years you have bought from him!’ His face was a study—and I had him on the horns of a dilemma. I could see he had told the Pippin that I was his wife

—and that he knew I was not—and was enjoying the joke himself.

‘Of course, if you have really taken a fancy to it, Madame, I’ll make you a special price, especially as your husband says he will buy this whole collection from me.’

Carsas could scarcely control himself. ‘You’ll never get it to Lond—’ he shouted, and then pulled himself up—he suddenly remembered it would never do to suggest I’d want it in London. The Pippin laughed outright.

‘The Señora shall have it sent wherever she wishes, and I’m sure we’ll agree about the price!’

He went at once to make out a bill, and I tackled Carsas.

‘I’m going to have that bed,’ I said, ‘and you’ve got to make it easy for me. Of course, I’ll pay you the same commission I should have done if you’d sold it to me. You can ship it as a “fertiliser,” if you like—you seem good at getting things through, and, after all, I shall not say a word about the costumes.’

He looked at me critically, and then smiled. He had evidently done a very good deal!

‘I thought at first you might be one of the English firms who are after them—that was why I didn’t want you to see them. Well, I suppose I’ll have to try and get that bed for you!’

But there was no difficulty about the bed. The Pippin quoted me such a low price for it that Carsas could not conceal his surprise.

‘Really——’ he began.

‘You are buying this bed for yourself, Señora?’ the Spaniard said, ‘you want it shipped to London? If that is so, I’ll be glad for you to have it, and I’ll pack it and send it off myself.’

The Pippin bent over me as I was signing his cheque, to tell me how to spell his name. ‘I’m so glad you’ve bought that bed, Señora,’ he whispered hurriedly. ‘It’s a fine piece, and Jeronimo Carsas has been trying to buy it from me for ten years!’

I still sleep in that bed!

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*THE LIMITED MENTALITY OF WILD
CREATURES.*

BY DOUGLAS GORDON.

WITHIN the past half-century, eminent writers have set themselves the difficult task of proving the wild animal to be the possessor of intellectual endowments only slightly inferior to those of mankind. Others again, equally skilful at establishing a diametrically opposite point of view, have laboured to deprive the bird or beast of any intellectual ability whatsoever, and students of the subject, adhering to either opinion as the case may be, find no lack of proof in support of the attitude to which they incline.

By way of specific instance, take the constantly recurring controversy as to whether a wild bird is or is not capable of simple mathematical calculation. Reduced to a direct issue, the answer, of course, is an equally plain and emphatic negative. The animal's inability to 'count' in the literal and generally accepted interpretation of the question is beyond doubt, but the circumstance in no way establishes either the stupidity or the incomplete mental construction of the creature concerned. It lacks the mathematical bent for the simple reason that arithmetic plays no part in animal life and outlook. A first-class wireless set is not considered an imperfect instrument on account of its incapacity to fulfil the purpose of a gramophone. Each device specialises in its own particular function, and upon a similar principle the mental eye of a bird or beast operates through different channels from those by means of which human conclusions are reached.

It is tolerably certain that even the most intelligent animal cannot add two single figures after the manner of man, and this circumstance is rendered the more curious by the fact that simple addition or subtraction is seldom beyond the capacity of a mentally deficient human being. At the same time it must be remembered that almost any wild creature is capable of performing, without the slightest mental effort, feats of distinction or discrimination that would tax the ingenuity of human mathematicians to the uttermost. The wide-ranging bird, after cruising for hours above the vast pine-forest or featureless prairie, experiences no difficulty in steering a

direct course to that particular tree or grassy tussock which for the time being represents its own niche in the illimitable Universe. Yet when viewed from a distance or a height, either forest trees or tufts of grass are as similar as the backs of cards. One has only to imagine a corresponding state of affairs from a human standpoint—an immense city, composed of precisely similar buildings, arranged without streets, numbers, or any individual feature. To distinguish one erection from another would constitute a task beyond human power, and life under such conditions would amount to mere chaos. In the everyday affairs of existence, even in the return to his own home, man must work by system, by numbers, by visible indication, and calculation, or—for it amounts to little less—by arithmetic. The wild creature knows nothing of such things, but no bird has ever yet failed to recognise its own tree, or has alighted unwittingly upon any nest other than its own, even though the site may be surrounded by thousands of others from which it differs in no visible respect. One may account for it as merely providing yet another instance of the 'sense of direction,' which expression is one of the most comprehensive in Natural History. It is none the less perfectly apparent that no matter what instinct constitutes the guiding force, that precise nest and its locality figures in the mind's eye of the bird. It serves as its conscious objective without which even the wonderful sense of direction would prove of little value.

Possessed of such a faculty, no bird needs to employ any human method of calculation arrived at by means of figures. It is equally certain, however, that in any circumstances that require the exercise of a purely human arithmetical process the bird would be helpless. It is more or less generally supposed that animals recognise the difference between one and more than one. Numerous experiments have proved that the normal bird will submit without desertion to the removal from the nest of all its eggs save two, provided that the depletion is executed judiciously. By removing one egg at a time, a clutch of six or seven may be reduced to two, the bird continuing to incubate without manifesting any realisation of loss. Under no circumstances, however, will she tolerate any further reduction. She will never continue to incubate a single egg—except upon the rare occasions when the original clutch has consisted of no more—and it is worthy of note that in the case of birds such as woodpigeons who lay two eggs only, the removal of one almost invariably is followed by desertion.

From these circumstances it is sufficiently clear that the bird

realises the incompleteness of its clutch when the latter is reduced to a single egg, but whether the conclusion is reached by calculation is quite another question. It seems equally conceivable that the realisation of loss is forced upon the bird by senses that are purely physical. With a few isolated exceptions, the minimum clutch that Nature permits for the reproduction of bird life consists of two eggs. This represents the utmost limit that suffices to sustain the incubating instinct. If further reduced, the sole remaining egg fails to satisfy. The desire to incubate is lost, and the bird forsakes its task, either to start afresh or to abandon the effort until another season, as the circumstances of the particular case may determine.

Young birds are protected from any risk of desertion by the parental instinct, which, quickened in the mother as hatching-time draws near, proves even more powerful and self-sacrificing during the brief period of its duration than the more fundamental impulse to incubate. Nestlings are seldom if ever abandoned, no matter how rapidly their number may dwindle, the case of the cuckoo-usurped nest providing a sufficiently apt illustration.

In the opinion of some observers, gregarious creatures, if not in the habit of keeping an actual census of their numbers, at least recognise loss. When a covey of partridges has been dispersed by any sudden alarm, the birds reassemble as quickly as possible, one of the number calling more or less incessantly until all the survivors have come in. From this it does not seem unreasonable to assume that the partridges to some extent keep record of their numbers, the more so since the rally-call appears to cease as soon as the muster is complete. Upon the other hand, it may be observed that the rally-note is usually uttered in response to the calls of stragglers who wish to rejoin the covey. When no further plea for guidance sounds from the surrounding fields, the leader of the covey—usually the old hen who originally mothered the brood—also relapses into silence automatically. The rally-note, therefore, must not be regarded as a roll-call, but merely a response. It is not probable that numerical decrease would be recognised by survivors unless sufficiently pronounced to affect the general conduct of the little community. A covey that originally consisted of twenty, if reduced to two or three, would probably realise to some extent its depleted state. Its survivors would lack the confidence that numbers impart, and its general behaviour would be somewhat different in consequence.

The same principle applies to the attitude that birds adopt

towards their dependent young. Nothing could exceed the solicitude that a mother grouse evinces for the safety of the chick that, detached from its fellows, pipes disconsolately amongst the heather. Were that chick unable to announce its solitary state, however, it is more than doubtful whether the mother would bestow a single thought upon the missing member of her family or even be aware of its absence. Absorbed in the care of those that remained, her maternal instincts would be satisfied, and while the majority of birds would be vaguely conscious of something lacking to the customary state of affairs were the brood suddenly and substantially reduced, it has been stated that a grey hen, by way of one example, is perfectly content as long as she retains a single chick upon which to bestow her attention.

Speaking generally, every rule, of course, being subject to exception, there appears to be good reason for doubt as to whether a bird is invested with actual identity so far as its companions or even its parents are concerned. An individual, needless to say, knows its mate, and a parent its offspring, as distinct from others, but at that point one would suggest that individuality ends. Nestlings or fledged young, like eggs, would be objects of care, but indistinguishable from one another. The weakling of the brood, for instance, would almost certainly not receive the especial attention that its particular case might be expected to demand, while even the capacity for recognition certainly expires when the young, having attained maturity, disperse to fend for themselves. When the winter flocks of starlings or woodpigeons assemble, parents and young would meet as strangers, mere units in one great company. There is no such thing as recognised relationship, and this circumstance is rendered the more remarkable by the fact that during the brief period of family life, the ability to distinguish relative from alien is astonishing.

For proof of the latter ability, it is only necessary to observe the behaviour of a brood of young swallows a-row upon a roof-top, awaiting the return of the mother bird with family supplies. The air around them may be literally alive with other swallows darting about in every direction, but the movements of these birds arouses no apparent interest in the little band of hope, each member of which sits chirping plaintively, every sense alert for the first glimpse of the one figure that represents the gratification of all its physical desires. To the human eye, in the main infinitely more discriminating, there is nothing to distinguish that one mother swallow from fifty others,

but the observer who watches the young birds carefully will note a curious thing. Suddenly and for no apparent reason, an electric current seems to pass through the expectant fledglings. The note of hopeful expectancy is changed for one of eager anticipation. Every wing is raised, every gape opened wide as each percher stands erect, but even so, some seconds may elapse before the old bird, whose distant approach has so obviously been perceived, detaches herself from the indiscriminate hurrying company of her kin and assumes distinct identity by heading for the roof-top.

The method that the mother bird adopts in the actual feeding of her young is worthy of study, providing a singularly apt illustration of avian psychology. When the expectant row consists of five fledglings, she begins as a rule at one end of the line. The first young one receives the food that she has brought, and upon her return with a further supply, the second in the row is served, then in his turn, perhaps, the third. One is filled with admiration at the systematic character of the proceeding, but the impression is no sooner formed than shattered. Upon the mother's return for the fourth time, the fledgling which by right of turn is obviously entitled to attention, for no perceptible reason is overlooked. The food is bestowed upon perhaps the fifth, or the first or second of the row, and so it goes on, one or two of the young birds—presumably the louder-voiced—receiving more than their apparent share at the cost of their less vociferous fellows. In all probability the disparity is eventually rectified, since the more noisy, when sated, might be expected to relapse into silence, leaving the less adequately supplied members to urge their claims unopposed. Since the more vociferous are probably the more lusty, however, it is equally likely that they contrive to secure the larger share, particularly if the food supply, together with the parent's patience and perseverance, is not inexhaustible, and this may be one of the reasons why a certain number of nestlings fail to 'make good'—yet another instance of the survival of the fittest principle. For the most part, however, each young bird ultimately obtains sufficient for his needs, but only by persistent assertion of his claim. Obviously there is no established law of division in avian family life.

One may rest assured that no member of a brood is regarded in the light of an individual, nor, in the event of loss, would it be mourned as such or even missed by the parent. The interest of the latter would concentrate automatically upon the survivors, and the same general principle applies to the units which compose a flock

or herd. Among gregarious beasts such as wolves, dogs, or ruminants, each animal to some extent recognises another with which it is familiar, while the presence of a stranger in the midst is immediately detected. When a number of small herds combine for any common purpose, animals that know one another usually hold more or less together, but there are no social *cliques*, no friendships. An absentee would be neither personally missed nor sought by its former fellows, any more than the loss of a coin or two from a handful of uncounted coppers would be noticed by the owner.

Such being the case, the belief, not infrequently entertained, that wild creatures take numerical stock of human enemies seems a trifle fantastic. Wild ducks exhaust the patience of the fowler by studiously avoiding the neighbourhood of the points at which the guns are posted. Theoretically, in such cases they have seen the enemy take cover, and, being well aware of his presence, hold aloof until the danger takes visible and unmistakable departure. It is claimed, however, that the birds may be outwitted by leaving one or two of the party in ambush. The ducks, being incapable of subtraction, are supposed to be deluded into the belief that the coast is clear, returning to their disturbed haunts with disastrous consequences. Some sportsmen, I believe, even go so far as to engage men to accompany them to the 'blinds' for no other purpose than to execute an obvious retreat as soon as the fowlers have taken up their position. The birds, scared into flight at the first approach of the entire party, are said to watch the exit of the non-combatants with satisfaction, and under the impression that everyone has gone, return the sooner.

If the ducks are indeed watching from afar and awaiting an opportunity to come back when they can do so with safety, there is no logical reason why the stratagem should not prove effective. On the other hand, there is room for doubt whether wild fowl would actually adopt such tactics, since in all probability, if driven away in the first instance, they would have removed for a while to some distant resting-place from which the movements of the sportsmen would be indiscernible. One is justified in wondering how big a part coincidence—the stock argument of the sceptic—has played upon those occasions when the stratagem has seemingly proved successful. In the first instance, one needs to be convinced of any direct connection between the departure of the fowlers and the return of the birds. The latter event might conceivably have taken place in precisely the same way had every man exercised some

further patience and remained at his post a little longer, or if no artifice had been employed. Success is frequently achieved without the aid of guile, and it is only reasonable to assume that the mental attitude of the birds in this respect would be the same under all circumstances. If upon one occasion they awaited the visible departure of an enemy that had disturbed them before again venturing into any prescribed area, they would not be likely to neglect the precaution another time.

Were the truth realised, there is every reason for assuming that the question as to whether an enemy is actually approaching or departing rarely figures in the calculations of a bird. The *proximity* of the supposed danger is the only point with which the avian mind appears to be concerned. A receding enemy causes quite as much alarm as one who is directly approaching. As often as not a brooding bird, like a rabbit in its form, allows the intruder to *pass* before stirring, then, when in reality safe from detection, takes flight. Of this peculiar feature of animal mentality one sees numerous examples, but the most noteworthy, perhaps, is that afforded by the raven, of all birds the most intelligent when judged from a human standpoint.

According to this bird's point of view, no human being may pass within a prescribed distance of the eyrie, or any place where the newly fledged young are resting, without constituting a menace. The direction that the assumed enemy is taking matters not at all. The mere fact of his having committed a trespass upon the guarded area is sufficient. I have frequently been escorted half a mile or so upon my way by a hoarsely vociferating raven, though heading directly away from the eyrie. The lapwing, the curlew, the whimbrel, and, most notable of all, the American crow, observe very similar tactics. The secret of such apparently pointless and even foolish behaviour lies in the avian inability to discriminate, and there is no justification for supposing that wild fowl upon the shore would prove themselves to be more logical. The appearance of enemies, whether coming or going, would have a purely disturbing effect, rendering the birds shy of the neighbourhood for a considerable while, and it is more than probable that the sportsman hinders rather than furthers his own cause by adopting unnecessarily ostentatious methods. His end would in all probability be better served by taking up his position with as little display as possible. In any case those birds which have seen him will not readily return, whether he feigns retirement from the scene or otherwise, any that appear

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to have been deceived being new-comers that neither saw him arrive nor his representative depart.

Upon the big game reserves and in other newly exploited parts of the world, the modern naturalist not infrequently finds it convenient to pursue his observations in the close proximity of a motor-car, to which he retires when some obstreperous buffalo or rhinoceros evinces active resentment at the disturbance of its privacy. As an *almost* invariable rule, the car serves as an effectual disappearing-box within which one is usually safe from attack. The fact that the metal structure contains the man of whom he was in pursuit rarely seems to occur to the mighty beast, nor does it adopt the obvious expedient—simple enough to a rhinoceros—of battering the car to pieces. The actual disappearance is sufficient, the amount of space that conceals the object concerned being beside the point, there being little distinction in the mind of bird or beast between a few square yards of metal or woodwork and comparative infinity. This attitude, moreover, is eminently consistent with animal behaviour in general. The most wary creature evinces very little fear of any man-made structure that offers no definite evidence of human occupation. In the stillness of sunrise the wildest animal approaches the inhabited house or the hurdle-hut in the fields with perfect confidence, and one must not suppose for a moment that either the game-bird or the wild brooding mother is deceived by the artificial 'blind' employed by sportsman or photographer. The secret of success lies in the man's ability to efface himself rather than in the perfection of his camouflage.

It should always be remembered that the wild animal's conclusions as to danger or safety are reached by other means and through other channels than those suggested by human logic. The wild duck sees safety not so much in the visible departure of an enemy as in the lonely silent shore and the peaceful attitude of other winged creatures. When the gulls rest contentedly along the water's edge, when the cormorant pursues his fishing within fifty yards of the beach and the crow or jackdaw hunts for crustaceans undisturbed, he is convinced that all is well. The danger that is not visible has no existence in his scheme of things, and when the unseen gun roars from behind the pile of seaweed or fringe of heather he is just as unpleasantly surprised as though the same thing had not happened a hundred times before in the course of his adventurous and precarious career.

Not along ago, I watched the feigned-departure trick employed

against a brooding carrion crow whose portrait was desired by a Nature-photographer. As a test of the avian capacity for arithmetic the case might be regarded as a proof of anything, according to the point of view that one desires to establish, but from a purely psychological aspect it had its interest. The nest had been built close to the ground in a lonely little tree beside a Dartmoor stream, and so closely did the occupier adhere to her post that her presence was neither declared nor suspected until a hand was almost placed upon the nest. The position rendered a 'close-up' of the bird when actually sitting impossible. It was decided, therefore, to await her return and attempt a snapshot as she again took wing, putting her to the trouble of a second flight for the purpose.

The party numbered three of whom two made an exit, leaving the photographer ensconced in some tall ling which commanded a view of the nest. He should have been invisible and, conventionally, the bird should have been satisfied. Such, however, was far from being the case. A survey of the position, undertaken some five minutes later, convinced her that both she and her nest remained under observation, and at last, reluctant further to impede her duties, the watcher vacated the field. Whether or not the crow witnessed his departure one cannot say. She was nowhere in sight upon a bare and empty landscape, but, however that may have been, upon returning to the place after a short interval she was found to be again in possession. This time, however, she proved to be less accommodating, taking once more to flight when the photographer was still fifty yards away from the nest.

Her action in this latter respect constituted, perhaps, the most interesting feature of the proceeding, being so completely at variance with her previous behaviour. Did she, one wonders, recognise the individual whose persistence had already caused her so much annoyance? She had previously allowed him to approach within a yard of her before taking wing. Was it a case of identifying an enemy—according to her lights—since anyone who takes too close an interest in a wild creature's movements is regarded as hostile? Or was her elusiveness upon this second occasion merely due to the fact that she was still disturbed in her mind, and had not yet relapsed into the torpid state of the heavily brooding bird? The case is open to almost any interpretation that one cares to place upon it.

It is perhaps superfluous to add that the conduct of a crow under such circumstances cannot be regarded as representative of bird behaviour generally. A brooding hawk or falcon, for example, if

driven from her nest, will return after a short lapse of time without apparent thought for a concealed watcher. Such a contingency does not seem to figure in her calculations. Again, upon the same day that witnessed the crow experiment just described, I saw similar tactics employed upon a ring-ouzel with a diametrically opposite result. In this case two of the party withdrew, leaving one observer posted upon a near rock in plain view. The ring-ouzel lost no time in returning to her task, and would probably have acted in the same manner had the entire party remained in sight. Her mental view of the situation was obviously different from that of the crow, owing doubtless to the entirely different character of the birds and their respective relations with mankind.

One is justified in wondering whether a wild creature is capable of identifying a human individual, even were the person concerned habitually dressed in scarlet or any outstanding colour. The feathered inhabitants of a garden appear to extend the same confidence to strangers that they display towards individuals by whom they are daily fed, while even domesticated animals will approach anyone who enters their enclosure at feeding-time. All comers appear to be regarded alike, as long as customary procedure is observed. The bird is concerned with circumstance rather than individual appearance. The cormorant that fishes daily around a pier without fear of the crowd regards with suspicion every movement of a solitary human figure upon the shore near its nesting-place. Woodpigeons, if unmolested, will fearlessly alight and even nest in garden trees, but when afield take startled flight from the owner of that garden, no matter how frequently they may have seen him at close quarters. A human being, indeed, seems to be regarded as one of a species that may prove either friendly or hostile according to setting.

The question as to whether animals in either their physical or mental outlook recognise racial distinctions between human beings is an interesting one. In cosmopolitan lands, is the negro, one wonders, regarded as a creature apart from the white settler who has proved himself a neighbour of a very different and infinitely more formidable character? It has been stated that the larger carnivores will never prey upon a white man if a negro is available—that a white hunter, sleeping in the open, may rest in perfect security if attended by natives of the country. For this, two reasons have been assigned. It is assumed, in the first instance, that the beast prefers the coloured victim as being more essentially its

natural prey, while another theory suggests that the alleged partiality for the negro displayed by lion or leopard may be due to realisation upon the animal's part that the coloured man, being usually unequipped with firearms, proves safer game.

The direct connection between the white man and the rifle may or may not be perceptible to the beast, but, however that may be, the apparently deliberate selection of the native by a lion in search of food may conceivably be due to a very obvious cause. Negroes, being far more numerous than white men in lion-haunted countries, naturally fall more frequent victims, as in the famous Tsavo case, when the camp contained one European only. Were the conditions reversed, it is scarcely probable that a man-eating carnivore would deliberately select a single negro from among a number of white men. Upon the contrary, one may assume with tolerable certainty that it is mainly a matter of opportunity, and that a human being of any description would serve the purpose of a confirmed man-eater.

Incidentally, there is reason for doubting whether man is the *natural* game of any wild beast. A visitor from Kenya recently told me that, speaking for an extensive area with which he is familiar, while lions and leopards are comparatively numerous, a man-eater is virtually unknown in the country. Unless directly provoked, the big *felidæ* are regarded even among the native population as dangerous to cattle only. One may go so far as to assert that in any part of the world the conventional 'man-eater' is an abnormal product, and any natural predilection for natives of the country, much less deliberate discrimination, is improbable. Kipling in his *Jungle Book* describes man as prey-forbidden to rapacious beasts by Jungle Law in view of inevitable reprisals. The wild creature's ability to anticipate future retaliation upon the part of man would involve, however, the exercise of deliberate calculation scarcely within the range of animal psychology.

The immediate effect of an act is doubtless apparent to the more intelligent bird or beast, but it is equally certain that the animal mind is not concerned with the possibility of indirect consequence. A lion might conceivably possess sufficient perspicacity to realise that attack upon a sportsman would immediately be countered by a bullet, but it would scarcely trace the connection between a midnight raid executed upon a camp and an expedition organised for its destruction a few days later. By way of more homely example, a dog that has been bitten by a snake and suffered serious illness from after effects, admittedly shuns a reptile of the same species in

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future. This fear, however, would be engendered by recollection of the sharp pain that accompanied the actual bite rather than the subsequent distress.

That same lack of foresight, other than purely instinctive provision against future want made by certain creatures, constitutes perhaps the most notable limitation of the animal mind. In the case of both birds and beasts one sees frequent examples in their obvious failure to recognise places that offer security against human persecution. There are numerous landowners who would gladly guarantee immunity to harassed creatures if only the animals upon their part would avail themselves of the privilege. The supposition that birds in particular soon discover and settle upon ground that provides security during the nesting-season is, unhappily, disproved by experience. Unless the locality, for any ulterior reason, possesses especial advantages from an avian point of view, immunity from persecution seems to be the last consideration. The circumstance is only characteristic of animal psychology, though incomprehensible when judged from the entirely misleading standpoint of human mentality.

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THE COTTAGE.

BY GODFREY LOCKER LAMPSON.

As your locks get scantier and greyer and your limbs less supple than they used to be, how vividly the scenes of thirty, forty years ago are thrown upon the screen of memory! With a thousand silken threads the heart is tugged at by images of the Past. It is the Past that you are inclined to dwell upon more than the Present or the Future, and the pictures that emerge are not so much the decisive turnings in your poor, pathetic story—marriage, war, deaths, illnesses—but trivial far-off things that at the time scarce made a ripple on the surface of Fate, but seemed part of Time itself, of the tideless current of peaceful, uneventful days.

Among such is a cottage which, of all the habitations of man, I love the best. When it comes back to the mind, it is on a flood of scents, sound and colour that the lapse of years has failed to extinguish, and which to-day are fresh as ever they were. The honeysuckle in the hedge, the mignonette in the border, the wall-flowers by the porch, the roses and the may, steal upon one with a wave of perfume as though they were actually in the room. So too with the strip of lawn with the wagtails running over it, and the robin perched on the sill, and the pine-needles strewn the gravel path, and the cat slinking through the shrubbery. Sharply they are featured for the inward eye as ever they were wont to be in fact. Likewise with the noises of day and night—the blackbird fluting in the early morning, the mower whetting his scythe, the tinkle of a rivulet, the scraping of a beech-bough in the wind, a pheasant going up to roost. You listen to them all once more, identical in strength and tone. Thus youth is lived again: so cannot even age deprive you wholly of the past. One of the scenes enacted with reprehensible regularity rises before me now as I hearken to the rumble of a great city. It is the figure of James Macpherson carrying a small paper parcel, tied with string. He was head gardener, short and stocky, with a broad Scots brogue, a long clean-shaven upper lip and reddish beard. Suspicious of every other employee and jealous of not a few, he was a devoted servant of the family at the big house, and regarded the younger members of it almost as though they were offspring of his own.

No other interest beyond these had he in life, and supervising the affairs of the garden and helping in the management of the estate; for he was a confirmed bachelor, with simple tastes and a disposition to save, and the limit of his excursions from one year's end to the other would be a local horticultural show or two, and, on rarer occasions, some floral exhibition farther afield. He was partial also to a mouthful of whisky, like others of his race, and unfriendly critics would hint that they had encountered him going home of an evening when a slight lapse from the vertical had momentarily contrasted with the sturdy uprightness of the inner man. How clearly he stands forth, photographed upon the mental retina nearly forty years ago, a portrait which has survived so many others that have long since faded and disappeared from view.

I can see him carrying the parcel with a self-conscious, half-guilty air as he passed acquaintances in the carriage-drive. It looked as though it contained a cardboard box which might have held anything—a pair of shoes that wanted mending or some other domestic commodity to be committed to the post. A trifle gingerly he bore it by a loop in his right hand, a little stiffly, yet with an effort of unconcern, if anyone stopped him for a chat on the way. All this I used to mark from the window where I sat awaiting his arrival. For during the greater part of the year the big house was let and I lived in seclusion in a cottage opposite the entrance gate, spending the week-ends there, cared for by Mrs. Grimes, a middle-aged lodge-keeper who dwelt across the way, a thin little body with an injured and slightly sour expression, but a superlative cook, her crisply-browned rice-puddings a revelation of what could be done with that uninspiring grain, her roast fowls a model of the culinary art. A great stickler for convention, she cannot always have approved. For her there was a loss of dignity in the son of the house sleeping in a cottage, while aliens snored in the rooms he had been born to. She was a childless woman and I believe she almost loved me as a mother, those acidulated features melting into softer lines as she sometimes stood and watched me at my solitary meal. Yes, there was Macpherson coming through the lodge gate with the brown-paper parcel in his hand. It looked so innocent, but was not so guiltless as it seemed. With what cunning upon that hairy countenance would he lay it upon the table and furtively undo the string. 'I have braaht a peach for ye'—and resting upon a quilt of spotless wool were three or four voluptuous 'Noblesse,' with velvet cheeks upturned, their delicate pallor tinged

with the faintest flush of conscious beauty. Out of the hot-house they had come, a building let with the mansion, demised with all its exotic and delicious contents for the term of the lease. It was rank robbery, larceny unabashed, and I was the receiver of the stolen goods, or, at best, an accessory after the fact. Not that the tenants would have grudged the fruit, though that was no excuse. With what undignified haste I wolfed it down; with what ecstasy, while the luscious juices spurted and overflowed—one peach after another, until none were left. For Mrs. Grimes must never suspect, lest an accidental word should escape abroad; so the stones were flung far out into the bushes and the skins trodden into the loose soil of the nearest flower-bed. At twenty you do these things, rejoicing and unashamed, but with the advance of the years the letter of the law becomes a tyrant and respectability usurps the throne of fun.

It was beneath the roof of that beloved shelter that many hours were spent digging in the treasures of the English classics; there too that were poured out the frenzies of its youthful tenant's heart, lines long since burnt and quite forgotten. The hard study and passionate hours are wellnigh expunged from memory—hardly a trace seems to be left. All that survive from that fairy time are a few quaint figures, distinct in outline as ever, and a trifling incident or two, stamped into the brain, when searing disappointments and fateful decisions have utterly melted away. It was another world, another life, so painful at times that anguish almost rent the breast asunder. Yet who would not live it again, who lived it once, to breathe that morning air and face those flushing dawns, when the body was tireless and elastic and miracles of hope and faith took place every day; when visions of untranslatable beauty floated alongside as you trod the woods and fields, and vast panoramas of romance spread to the edge of the world as you gazed out upon it? Now is all drear and darkly unconvincing. As you look around, there are huge heaps of ashes, some of them still smoking, others cold and dead. The dawns have turned to sunsets and the miracles of faith to endless questioning.

The woods that surrounded the cottage were a veritable sanctuary of bird life. Great and small there were of these wild, feathered beings; from the lordly heron, that wandered to and fro between the ponds on slowly beating wing, to the minute fire-crest that hung her invisible nest from a branch of the yew beneath the window. To catch the first cuckoo's note, wafted

upon the breath of an April noon ; to wait on tiptoe by the hazels for the magic music of a May night ; to watch the pigeons in a high wind coming in for shelter to a clump of larch ; to listen to the mallard passing overhead with singing flight in autumn's dusk by the lake's edge—these were delights that never could be stale. What bird was there that was not beautiful ? Winged wizards, necromancers all, they made a fairyland of meadow, copse and sky. No sadder landscape can there be than where birds are not. The very life has been extracted, the mystery and charm. They are a link between us and the angels, earth and heaven, the visible and invisible. Their message issues from the remote past, from the earliest days of the planet, before sin and punishment ; aye, earlier still, for they are voices from where there is no death. They sing the language also of the future, music that will fill the spheres when there is no more pain. Spirits of no time or epoch, immortal youth is theirs, eternal joy.

There was a particular oak coppice with a large pool in its midst which every kind of local bird seemed to visit. A rich sward, nibbled closely by the rabbits, bounded it on one side and mossy banks with a stockade of rushes closed it in on the others. Fed by a clear runnel that issued from it again to make a scampering brook lower down in the wood, it was never stagnant or muddy, and on cloudless summer days was a deep amethystine blue, skimmed by dragon-flies of every colour. Here one could lie on hot afternoons, watching the warblers clinging to the reeds and the white cups of the lilies reflected in the water's depths. There was not a sound but was made by some wild creature or by one of Nature's processes. The human race might never have existed, for there was not a sign of any human hand. It might have been the Garden of Eden before the advent of Man. No fitter spot could have been found for quiet meditation, removed as it was from the world's highway in a setting of perpetual peace. What did success matter here, or failure ? What was success ? Of all questions it was the hardest. The answers were many, but were any of them right ? It was easier to say what success was not—To have made a mountain of money and be conscious that you have no place in the affections of those for whom you spend it and whom you love.—To have attained eminence at the sacrifice of all leisure.—Although possessing plenty, to yearn for something different.—To wring all you can out of life and to be aware that those whose regard you would have dislike or despise you.—To have achieved a position

beyond your merits, and be reminded of it every day.—To have been on the best terms with the 'best' people, and gone in fear of discovery of some vice or deed.—Whatever else you may possess, to have a poisonous thorn in the flesh that you cannot tear out—These are not success. Your obituary notices may say so, but *you* will have known better. What 'successful' men and women we see about us; yet, if we had to take their miseries too, we would not exchange places for all the wealth of Israel!

It was in the stilly summer nights that the cottage and its garden were at their best; when the moon rode above the landscape and the music of a waterfall was the only persistent sound. A bat would be flickering about the eaves, while from time to time an owl would utter its mournful cry and the whirring of a night-jar be heard in the distance like an incantation. A rat would cross the garden path and a bird stir in the rhododendrons, while the glow-worm hung her lamp as a beacon for her mate in the short grasses. The cottage was transfigured at such an hour; the creepers turned to silver, the impenetrable yew spectral and immovable beside the door. The white flowers shone starrily in their beds and the cockchafer drove past on booming wing. Unearthly was the scene, bedewed in splendour in the eerie light. The tall limes that dominated the big house could be discerned towering, a misty blur. What were they all expecting, waiting for? Was it merely the dawn? The moth that fluttered against your cheek was in the secret, whilst you stood wondering. The leaves, mice, moles, the running water—the burrowing, flying, growing, hasting things—all knew and were communicating with one another, understandingly, conspiratorial, in the hushes of the night. Only man was ignorant, standing perplexed without an alphabet before the book of Time.

The cottage now is full of ghosts. An aged couple are in occupation of it and I went to see them the other day. There was the self-same room where supper used to be laid nearly forty years ago, the very table, and one of the remembered chairs, on the extreme edge of which, as though the proceeding were not quite proper, my cook and caretaker, invited to take a glass of port, would sometimes sit, and in acid tones comment upon the family across the way, the slothfulness of the men-servants, the looks and temper of the mistress, the pedigree of the husband, the manners of the children, the quality of the guests, the parsimony that ruled

in the domestic economy—all to the detriment of the tenants of the big house and the contrasted glory of those who owned it. Two of the familiar prints—the Coliseum and a pugilist with battered countenance—still hung upon the wall. And the grate with its fender were the same, standing by which, one autumn evening, Macpherson and Dougal, the gamekeeper, had, with glasses in their hands, pledged the young squire, wishing him long life, good health and a seat in Parliament. The yew-tree had lost a branch, but was as green and vigorous as ever. A trifle more worn was the stone threshold over which so many feet had so often passed. The rhododendrons were taller and gaunter, but a shelter still for sleeping choristers. The garden path was mossy as of yore and the walnut-tree was shedding its fruit in a corner by the iron fence. Nothing much had altered save the youth who had dwelt there. Gone were the days when his heart had wellnigh broken, but gone too were the sunlit hours, when dreams had been realities and realities had seemed like dreams. Passion, joy, agony, romance, youth's adventure, hope and promise—these had perished long ago, and a chill seemed to hang in the air as one leaf after another detached itself in silence and with the ghost of a sigh fluttered to the ground.

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THE TOLL OF THE LAST ARROW.

BY D. F. SUTTIE.

WHITE evening mist lay low over the wide valley and drifted slowly as though to cover its nakedness; for the summer heather had lately been burned and only blackened gnarled roots remained, except here and there where bog set a trap for the unwary. On the far side of the valley, above the creeping mist, the red light of the setting sun shone across the tops of the forts and threw the clear-cut towers into bold relief, while the lower wall between the forts was shaded by falling night. On the near side on a tiny knoll by the margin of the forest sat Hedai the arrow-maker, idly turning an arrow-head between his fingers; and within easy reach of his hand lay his bow and skin arrow-carrier. Beside him in an attitude of careless ease sprawled a tall, fair-haired youth whose deerskin cloak, so worn as to leave his right arm free, proclaimed him a hunter; yet he was unarmed, and it was that fact that concerned Hedai most, although from the manner in which the old man gazed first at the wall on the far side, then at the wide encircled mounds on his own side of the valley, he seemed to be more interested in them than in his companion.

'They sneered,' Hedai repeated slowly. 'They laughed at me because I am old.'

"Too old to make an arrow-head," they said; "too weak to be of use; a burden to the hunters." Bedi said, too, that you were a stirrer-up of mischief and that the time had come to send you to the forest to fend for yourself. And I . . .'

'And you, Lasta the reckless! Are you like the others? Because dogs growl, must you rush into the quarrel? Have I not warned you how men must fight among themselves when they are too lazy or too ignorant to find better to do? It was not so in the old days when the Strangers on the Wall feared my arrows. All the young men hunted then, and in the seasons when the days are short we raided the forts and took what we needed, till they set more guards on the Wall and our people became afraid and believed it meant death to go near. That was long ago. Now these men must have been withdrawn again and the Wall must

be weak. I have pleaded with the Council to allow us to raid once more. Why should we go hungry while the Strangers sit in comfort? They have burned our heather and frightened away our game because they are afraid of us—afraid that we shall crawl to the Wall as we used to do and attack them suddenly. I have told the chiefs plainly that we are too many idle men here. . . .

‘And they say that you must be the first to go,’ Lasta broke in bitterly. ‘Bedi told me. He said the Council would send you into the woods because your arrows were bad and because you were inciting the hunters to throw away their lives in attacking the Wall. And if the hunters were killed, the Druids might have to find their own food, which I told him and he was very angry. But I proved to him that your arrows *are* better than any other and also that *I* have not forgotten how to fight.’

‘Lasta, the one who doesn’t forget, I named you,’ groaned the old man. ‘You must squabble like the rest; you must shoot arrows—good arrows—at trees, and so lose the head; then you must fight with the son of Mara the Druid!’

Lasta’s lip curled:

‘What do the Strangers call us?’ he asked. ‘Picti! Freebooters! People that live on the leavings! They say that we eat from the rubbish-heaps of the great Wall. Fiech! I am no freebooter, no searcher of middens; nor are you, Hedai the ancient. The people here hate us just because we belong to other lands and they forget that you came to help them to take the Wall and that my people were killed in that endeavour. Who taught me to shoot and to fight? I think it was Hedai the arrow-maker.’

‘And who taught you the customs?’ answered the old man. ‘’Twas Hedai the old fool. I taught you well and you knew. Why then did you strike? What though Bedi, son of Mara, did say foolish things? Did that harm you?’

‘He said evil things. But I showed him your arrows were good,’ boasted Lasta. ‘And because he said I was weak I broke his arm. That was the trick you taught me. Now I must go back, or they may come and fetch me. This is farewell, Hedai, for the Council do not love me—much; and there will be one or two matters besides a broken arm that I must answer for.’

Lasta half-raised himself from the ground and shook his fair hair back from his forehead. It was a wild free gesture like that of an animal scenting the danger for which he has waited impatiently.

‘Stay,’ said the old man, softly. ‘For you to go before the

Council at dawn can mean but one ending. There is another way. Take my bow and run to the forest while yet you are free. There is none that can beat you in a race, so perhaps you can win through with the whole pack at your heels.'

'And let the Druids kill you in my place! But if you will come too, I'll run.'

Hedai shook his head:

'Too old, too old! There is no chance that way.' He turned the arrow-head between his fingers and gently felt the sharpness of the flint. 'The finest head I ever made,' he mused. 'But what use is one arrow against a whole encampment?'

'Bind it to a shaft, Hedai,' said Lasta. 'Then give me your bow and what other arrows you have, and run through the forest to the highest hill where the rocks used to be our hiding-place. I'll take four lives and Mara's among them before they kill me.'

'Such a scheme was like you, Lasta. You can run; none doubts it. You can shoot and fight. But as a maker of plans you are no better than the hedgehog who rolls himself up and blindly hopes to stab somebody. To die is a very little thing, perhaps, but to die before my plans are finished is to die twice; and the manner of your death would kill me. Do you remember how we used to plan to take the forts, how we dreamed of the day when I would make you a great bow and the finest of arrows, and how you would lead a force against the Wall and destroy it? But these people will never be led; they would rather sit here and die of the sickness that comes to-day and goes to-morrow, to return again the next day, and that lives in the shadow of the Wall. I have made my greatest arrow, one such as I would have made for you when you led . . .' Hedai stopped and glanced about him as though afraid of his thoughts being read. His eyes filled with a fever light and he laid an eager hand on his companion's sun-browned knee.

'I have a plan,' he whispered; 'a terrible plan. We may yet live to conquer the Wall.'

'Dreamer,' laughed Lasta. 'I am as good as condemned already. Besides, you yourself have said we couldn't run away.'

'I did; and we cannot. Yet I have a plan. Many a game we have played together. Will you play another with me: one last game, with the finest arrow-head on one side and death on the other? Many may die. Will you play, Lasta the reckless?'

'I'd play any game, Hedai, for I die anyway; but my time is

too short and I doubt my troubles have brought madness to you. Give me your bow and bind that arrow-head to its shaft; then I'll play your game. But be quick, or the trumpets of the Strangers will sound their darkness hour, and I must return.'

The old man curled his lean muscle-knotted arms round his knees:

'I play this game,' he said, 'I, Hedai the old arrow-maker, who was the greatest hunter of my time. I am too old to run, but you, Lasta, must run for me. The sun dips and you must go back to your post, or they will come for you and that would spoil our plan. To-night you must not sleep, but keep your muscles supple and rest in your place till the sun shows in the morning. On the first notes of the trumpets of the Strangers you must start and run straight for that part of their Wall that still shows red; then hide in the haw-haw, crawl towards the rising sun, and you will find me waiting. Remember, when the people see you run, they will follow. Go now.'

Lasta sprang to his feet, but the old man gave him no parting word. He sat, turning his grey, polished arrow-head in his hand; then he would drop it into his palm the better to admire his handiwork, and he felt the groove for the shaft that he had cut along its flat side to see if by chance he had left any tiny ridge not smoothed away.

As Lasta went towards the higher ground where the mounds stood out against the blue evening sky, the sound of Roman trumpets came softly through the still air; and he was the last man to cross the moat and enter the gateway through the stone-and-earth rampart that encircled the mounds.

On the sloping ground within the rampart men squatted in groups, their bows on the ground beside them, and their shoulder-coverings of skin pulled round them, for the night air was chilly. They talked excitedly of the coming Council meeting; but as Lasta passed between them their voices fell away. He was, as it were, dead to them; and as a sign of his departure he required to go unarmed, while they appeared not to notice his presence. In reality, they were afraid. To pay him any heed, to turn and look after him, to speak a word to him, or to pass him one look of understanding might be misconstrued by a mischief-maker and the tale carried to the Druids before whom it was difficult to explain away the simplest matter. So Lasta passed on, ignored by the young men who had been his companions, till he came to his given spot

on the southern slope of the outermost mound, which was the post of honour allotted to the greatest hunter, and he lay down, drew his deerskin round his chest and his kilt of skin round his thighs to keep him warm, and he watched and listened.

The night was gathering in ; in the cloudless sky stars appeared, Across the valley where the evening mist was slowly clearing away. the glow of Roman fires shone redly over the great Wall. On the highest central mound of the encircled encampment lived the Druids, and the fires of their people were lit here and there on the lower ground and on the inner slopes of the outer mounds on which the women, children, wives and married men were quartered, while the young fighting men were stationed on the outermost slopes overlooking the rampart.

Lasta from his post opposite and above the entrance to the encampment could hear the murmur of voices that came from the central part of the fortification ; but as the night wore on they, like the fires, died down and a heavy silence fell. For the first time a feeling of dread loneliness oppressed him and the chill of night seemed to creep into his stomach. He wanted to sleep and forget the troubles that were to come next day ; but Hedai had given him a task to do.

He gently worked one muscle after another to keep them supple and to make sure of his wakefulness, and he wondered what Hedai was doing and what subtle plan he had devised ; but Hedai's schemes were usually too profound to fathom. At any rate, Lasta knew, he was to lie awake and to keep his muscles soft ; and on the first notes of the Roman trumpets he was to run towards their wall. The rest he could safely leave to Hedai.

The Picts, or freebooters, as the Romans called them in scorn, had become lazy. Since their last abortive attempts to destroy the Wall they had taken to quarrelling among themselves for the leadership of the next attack which, of course, never came off. They lacked discipline ; game was becoming scarce ; but their greatest trouble, from which the Druids were not exempt, rather they were more prone than the hunters, was, as Hedai said, the sickness that comes to-day and goes to-morrow, to return the next day, and that lives in the shadow of the Wall. And they feared it greatly, for it meant death, and no man knew when it would come upon him.

In their laziness they set no guards, but every man was accustomed to sleep until the encampment was stirred by the *réveillé*

of the Romans. That was the point on which Lasta counted most. But it was possible that the excitement of his trial would make some wakeful and his chances of escape would be lessened; for between him and the entrance lay several groups of men and they were armed. Once they realised that he was trying to escape, it would be every hunter's joy to join in the chase; that was sport after their own hearts, and the fortunate man who brought down the quarry would gain favour with the Druids.

Lasta's thoughts became confused as the interminable hours of darkness dragged on; those things that he had always considered of great importance seemed now to be of little value and he became impatient for action. The very restraint he laid upon his restlessness made him sleepy, and when his eyelids drooped he would waken up as though shocked, only to go over more deeply next time.

Slowly, taking care to make no noise, he worked his legs and wriggled his back, for he knew the strain that was coming. But sleep was his greatest enemy; even as he eased his muscles his eyelids closed. Soon, he thought, it would be dawn and he would have to prove his boasted superiority over the others, and the stake on his side was life. Yet he seemed to care little; and as he smiled to himself at the thought, eyelid met wrinkled cheek and he slept.

But Hedai the arrow-maker had not slept. When the sun went down, he remained seated on his knoll and watched Lasta walk back to the Pictish encampment. In a way he felt proud, for Lasta carried himself with an easy grace that spoke of unconcern. Nor did he himself return to the encampment, for none would trouble about him sufficiently to miss him; besides, their minds would be fully occupied with Lasta's misdemeanours. Instead, he brooded over his plan, and as though to gather fresh inspiration, kept turning his latest arrow-head between his fingers and admiring his handiwork. For the arrow-head was finely finished, sharp, and smooth as only polished flint can be; and to see that its point would draw blood with the slightest pressure Hedai tried it on the hard skin of his foot.

When the lights of the fires died away, he set about his plan. He bound the new arrow-head to the shaft he had cut, and he did it with care even greater than his custom. Then he took his bow and stepped softly into the night towards the Wall across the valley; and he kept to the lowest ground till he came to the stream that

ran through the middle of the burned land, where, in a bog, he found a peat hole.

Although the night was moonless, Hedai took no risk of his project being spoiled by the sharp eyes of a sleepless watcher. He took off his deerskin clothing, covered his body from head to foot in black peat mud, and rested until it dried on him like a dark-brown skin; only then did he don his coverings again, take up his weapons, and crawl forward.

It was weary work for an old man, especially when he reached the far side of the valley where the ground was rougher and rose steeply upwards; but he did not halt till he came to the deep haw-haw that the Romans had dug in front of the Wall, and he slid down the overgrown side.

From the deep ditch to the foot of the Wall the slope was abrupt; partly because when the ditch was dug, earth and stones had been thrown up to form a glacis, and because in later years that had been added to by refuse thrown down from the Wall. And the smell of filth and mud in the ditch and from the rubbish-heaps above was overpowering as Hedai made his way towards the rising sun in search of a suitable hiding-place; there in a natural excavation, overhung by rock and hidden by thorn-bushes, he settled himself to await the dawn when Lasta would carry out his part of the plan. Hedai had great faith in the lad he had brought up and trained so carefully; little did he think that at that moment he was fast asleep.

And as Lasta lay, time sped on with the terrible sureness that goes immediately before a great event. It seemed like a second, yet the fires of Sirius turned dim before a hand shook him to wakefulness. A fierce desire to die fighting possessed him, for he thought that the messengers had come to take him before the Council.

'Lie still,' said a voice in his ear. 'It is I—Resai. Run now and go by my sleeping-place. Everyone sleeps. Make for the woods.'

'Go back to your place,' whispered Lasta, and a lump rose in his throat and nearly made him cough. 'Go back, Resai. I will remember this.'

'Run, for Mara is determined on your death. They say Bedi is dying of the injuries you gave him.'

Lasta shivered; not because of the threatened fate, nor because through him Bedi was dying—these happenings seemed of no account, but because the eastern sky was turning to a lighter shade

and at any moment others besides Resai, the well-meaning friend who had risked so much for him, might waken.

'Go back and sleep,' he whispered. 'If any knew you came, you would die with me. And, Resai, for our hunting days, waken no one. Let them rouse themselves.'

'You have a plan?'

But Lasta laid an urgent hand over his friend's mouth. Someone below him nearer the rampart had stirred.

For minutes they lay head to head and very still; then Resai wriggled away as he had come, while Lasta hardly dared to breathe and his heart pounded on the ground.

Slowly the blue disappeared in the east and green took its place, then yellow and delicate orange. On the farther side of the valley the earth began to take shape. A round hill-top appeared black against the sky; then it, too, turned pink. Gradually the colours of the dawn displaced the night and the dark, forbidding Wall emerged out of the gloom. The flat tops of forts came into sight; and as the sun's rim came over the eastern hill, the battlements were lit in red.

Lasta curled up his legs, ready to spring downhill. Already he could see the exit clearly; between him and it lay the men who would stop his progress. Some lay curled up, head rested on arm that made a pillow; some lay face down; and others on their backs. As he watched them, the minutes seemed to be drawn out into hours, while the rising of the sun was like a wind-driven storm; it came blazing up the sky, flooding the country with dazzling light. Shadows dissolved, and now and then there was a glint from the Wall showing where the helmet of a Roman sentry reflected the ray.

Far in the distance sounded a tiny sweet note. Lasta quivered. Then a gleam of light flashed from the battlements of a fort directly opposite him; that, he knew, was either from helmet or trumpet. And his signal came clearly. Four notes; then utter silence for a time.

As Lasta leapt between the groups of drowsy, startled men, he heard the trumpets of the other forts blare out a wild fanfare. Up and down the Wall it went like the blast of thunder in granite hill, such as had not been heard from the Wall for many years.

Lasta sprang towards the exit. Sleepers on either side of his path sat up as he passed, and when they realised that something extraordinary was happening they wakened their companions and

shouted wildly ; and by the time he reached the opening in the rampart men had gathered to oppose his passage. But their sleepy heads were confused. With a push here, a well-directed blow there, or a timely side-step, Lasta made the gap, crossed the bridge over the moat, and started his race across the valley.

The call of Roman trumpets from the Wall and the shouts of his own people behind him spurred him on. A far-shot arrow hissed past his shoulder ; yet it had barely buried its head in the ground before his foot was past the mark. The going, however, was hard, and lasting power rather than speed counted ; for the springing roots of burnt heather tore at bare feet and caught round ankles, threatening to bring the runner down with a headlong crash. And where the ground had escaped the great fire there was soft, sticky, sinking bog.

When Lasta reached the stream midway across the valley, he realised that his pursuers were spreading out behind him ; that made doubling on his part impossible, and his one hope lay in the subtlety of Hedai. Nor did he slack ; rather, as he approached the Wall his pace increased and he raced up the steep slope towards the ditch, his shoulder-covering flying out behind him like the broken wing of a wounded bird.

Now his danger came from in front and not from the rear. Arrows from the Wall flew past him with a gentle singing sigh ; an ill-thrown spear hummed like a snipe's tail in spring ; and stones whined over his head. But he reached the ditch in safety, tumbled in, and under cover of clinging creepers, long grass, thorn and bush, began to worm his way towards the rising sun ; and he had gone but a little way when Hedai's old hand drew him into the shelter of the hole under the rock and thorn.

Overhead there was turmoil. Great stones crashed down from the Wall and shook the ground so that the rubbish from the heaps above sliddered into the ditch and threatened to bury the refugees. Bow-strings twanged, and arrows sighed like a soft wind. The snap of ballista as they threw over rocks rose above the yells of defiance. Then like a gale that is spent the uproar died away and only the sound of voices came from the Wall where there was joy at the effectual repulse of what the defenders took for an attack.

Hedai sat huddled up in the hole, holding Lasta's arm to keep him still. Even when comparative silence fell he would not move or speak ; and when Lasta would have complained of the odours that revolted him, Hedai commanded silence. So Lasta had to

content himself through the long day with spying out of a peep-hole he made between the rocks and bushes.

The Wall towered over them. Its lower part was made of hewn rocks built securely, and not, as was the common Pictish custom, set together in mould. It seemed that no force on earth could ever injure its solidity. On the flat top of a near-by fort Lasta could see the heads and shoulders of the guards, who, in their helmets, looked impregnably strong, like the Wall; and when he compared their state with that of his people, he wondered that one so wise as Hedai could have been smitten with such a madness as to imagine that they could ever take or destroy the Wall. Also, he began to doubt the tales Hedai had told him of how he had raided the forts.

When night fell and the white mist rose to veil their movements, they crawled along the foul ditch, and when they came clear of the scene of conflict they climbed out and put the valley between themselves and the formidable Wall. By keeping well away from Pictish encampments they arrived before daybreak at the rocks under the high hill where they could hide in safety.

And Lasta confessed his great sin:

‘Had it not been for Resai, I should have slept,’ he said mournfully; ‘and should never have seen your magic. How was it the Strangers knew our people would attack them? I heard their trumpets sound the alarm before I began to run; and it spread up and down the Wall farther than man can see.’

‘Magic!’ chuckled the old man. ‘Just my magic! Yet it would have been useless but for Resai. When you come back to lead an army against the Wall you will remember him. For the race you won, I forgive you the shame of sleeping.’

‘But how did you warn the Strangers, Hedai?’

‘Lasta, if only you would use your head! There are times when you may tell a man the truth and he will not believe; yet if you show him a sign that is untrue he will believe it. I showed the Strangers a false sign and they believed the lie was the truth. Had I shown my arrow to those who would have killed you and told them that it would destroy many of them, they would have laughed at me; yet that would have been the truth. Even you would have taken the arrow-head from me to kill Mara, and so waste my arrow and be killed yourself. I knew that when you ran the people would give chase; more, I knew they would spread out to prevent you doubling.’

Hedai paused and sighed as though glad that the past was over; and he continued:

'I hid in that filthy haw-haw. . . . (Who said we were no midden-pickers?) When the trumpeter of the Strangers stood up clearly to blow his blast of scorn, I sent him my messenger. Once I was the greatest hunter, and it seems I have not lost my art; for I shot my arrow, and the finest arrow-head ever I made is lost in the head of that trumpeter. So the Strangers believed falsely that an attack would be made against them and the alarm spread up and down the Wall, just as it used to do.'

'And if I had slept?' said Lasta sorrowfully.

'Twas a fine sight to see you run with the pack spreading out behind,' returned the old man. 'The shame of sleeping you will always remember. What was the first law I taught you? And when you come back to destroy the Wall you will bring me with you, for I have lived long in its shadow and have hated it bitterly. Let us go to the lands where free people live.'

And they went northwards over the hills and moors and through sweet-smelling forests; and after many years they returned and led an army of fierce people, some in chariots and some on ponies, against the Wall. But that, and the happiness of Hedai the arrow-maker and the recklessness of Lasta, the one who doesn't forget, is quite another tale.

A NEW THEORY ABOUT MARSHAL NEY.

BY A. G. MACDONELL.

MARSHAL NEY, Duke d'Elchingen, Prince de la Moskowa, and holder of many stars and orders, has been generally written off by historians as a blockhead, endowed with enormous bravery and precious little intelligence, like a bull in a Spanish bull-ring, or a boxer in a travelling fair. Two arguments support this view. The first is Ney's bungling during the 1813 campaign, when for the first time he commanded a really large corps; the second is the wild, blunt-nosed battering-ram which he hurled over and over again up the slopes at Waterloo. On these fatal deeds rests his reputation as a fool.

I think there is more in it than that. I do not believe that a soldier whose military career was practically flawless for twenty consecutive years ought to be dismissed as a stupid blunderer, without a very careful examination of his military life as a whole. Michel Ney was a pre-Revolution trooper of Hussars. His first battle was the extraordinary affair at Valmy in 1792, and it was followed by service, as a captain, with the immortal army of the Sambre-et-Meuse at Jemappes, Neerwinden, Louvain, Valenciennes and Fleurus. It was a good school for learning something about war. The Revolutionary armies of France of those early years were filled with a wild fanatical exaltation of soul that swept the hidebound professional armies away like withered leaves. There was only one rule—attack, attack, and keep on attacking, and Jourdan and Kléber were good masters to sit under. In those whirlwind days the cavalry rode in front of the army, and the scouting Hussars rode in front of the cavalry, and the brilliant young Captain Ney led the Hussars.

Seven years after Fleurus General Ney was Inspector-General of Cavalry, and three years after that, in 1804, he was given command of the Sixth Corps of the new army, henceforward known as the 'Grande Armée.'

From that moment the young Hussar became absorbed in infantry work. He threw himself into the study of infantry tactics, and even wrote manuals of instruction for his corps. The two

main precepts which he insisted on over and over again were 'Fast marching and straight shooting.' In the subsequent campaigns the Sixth Corps certainly marched fast, but it is doubtful if any French infantry of those days ever shot very straight. Apparently a soldier of the Boulogne army had to fire only one musketry course, and that consisted of three shots at a target at point-blank range. If he hit the target he was passed as a marksman, if he missed, well—there was always the bayonet.

In these technical instructions which the enthusiastic Corps Commander drew up for his men, there are two singular paragraphs. One shows Ney's passionate belief in the essential goodness of the French character.

'Our soldiers ought to be instructed about the cause of each war. It is only when aggression is legitimate that one can expect prodigies of valour. An unjust war is utterly repugnant to the French character.'

The second paragraph illuminates the whole life of this desperate fighter. It gives an outline of how the evening of a victory ought to be spent. The victorious regiments should be paraded on the battlefield in the soft quietness after the tempest, each near the scene of its glory, with the regimental bands playing, and the generals inspecting and congratulating; then there would be a *feu de joie*, five cartridges per man and five rounds per gun, before the glorious victors retired to bivouac. This queer notion of a sort of militarised Te Deum, a sacramental worship of Victory and Glory, is the key to Ney's character. He had no belief in God or Money or Ambition or Politics or anything except Military Glory. His only passionate conviction was that every soldier ought to die in battle, and that those who died in their beds were not true soldiers. Rank and medals did not mean Glory to Ney. He twice refused promotion on the ground of inexperience, at a time when his contemporaries were racing gaily up the ladder. But when at the siege of Michelsburg, Napoleon sent an order that he was to wait for Lannes' Corps, Ney replied: 'Tell His Majesty that here we don't share Glory with anyone.'

For Ney there was only one God, the God of Battles, and if his Deity gave him Victory, the one divine and perfect gift in the religion, it was only right to thank Him with rolls of musketry and cannon salvos.

This paragraph in the Marshal's text-book illustrates two other things. The first is that he never imagined that a battlefield on

the evening of a victory could be anything but a beautiful place. For him it was a great, quiet cathedral. He never thought for a moment of the groans and cries of the wounded or the bodies of the dead. He probably never heard them or saw them. He was not afraid of wounds himself. As for the dead, they had fulfilled the only true function of a soldier and had died in battle.

'Help me, Marshal!' cried a straggler in Russia.

'What do you expect?' replied Ney coldly. 'You are another victim of war.'

When he found an aide-de-camp mourning a friend killed on the Beresina in 1812, his consolation was, 'It was evidently his turn. Better we should mourn him than he us.'

Only once is it recorded that the sight of a battlefield really shook those iron nerves, and that was when he walked across the field of Eylau, on the day after Augereau's Corps had lost direction in the blinding snowstorm, and Murat had had to lead his charge of ninety squadrons to save the Grand Army from destruction.

And the third deduction which we can make from Ney's military *Te Deum* is that even then, in 1804, a Marshal and a Corps Commander, he had not the faintest idea of the way his Commander-in-Chief was in the habit of waging war. Having missed the miraculous Italian campaign of '96, and Egypt, and Marengo, Ney was still living in the days of Frederick, Condé, Villars and Luxembourg. A battle was a battle. At the end of the day the vanquished retired, the victors bivouacked on the field, and there was a gentlemanly pause. Ney did not know that all that had changed, and that in the new warfare a battle was the breaking of the crest of a wave, and the flood which swept irresistibly after it was the real victory. He was soon to learn. There was no dawdling on the field of Jena in '06 to fire salvos and beat drums. On the tenth day after that battle Ney and his infantry were a hundred and twenty miles away, thundering at the gates of Magdeburg.

The only incident of Ney's life with the army of England worth recording is that a plausible gentleman arrived one day at Sixth Corps Headquarters with a scheme for building an observation balloon. The Corps Commander was delighted with the idea, but not so delighted as the plausible gentleman who departed unobtrusively with thirty thousand of the Marshal's hard-won francs jingling in his pocket. This was especially annoying as it was

about this time that the Marshals clubbed together to give Josephine a ball, and the cost of it set them each back ten thousand francs.

The invasion of England came to nothing. In 1805 Austria declared war and the Grand Army poured across Europe like the rivers of the plains. In the lightning campaign that followed, Ney came twice into prominence.

The first occasion was intimately connected with the earliest of Ney's great quarrels. His corps, the Sixth, was suddenly joined to the Fifth, Lannes' Corps, and both were put under the orders of Murat, Commander of the Reserve Cavalry and husband of Caroline Bonaparte and so brother-in-law of the Emperor. Lannes, who had wanted to marry Caroline Bonaparte himself, hated Murat in any case, and both he and Ney were furious at being put under the swaggering cavalryman, whose knowledge of infantry work was, they considered, nil.

Ney soon started to make trouble over what he thought was Murat's faulty disposition of the Sixth Corps upon the two banks of the Danube and at last Murat impatiently told him to stop bothering him. 'I only make my plans in the presence of the enemy,' he declared. But Ney was right, and Murat was wrong, as he very soon discovered when his imperial brother-in-law arrived and had a glance at the situation. The Sixth Corps was in a mess, and the only way out was the immediate storming of the bridge over the Danube at Elchingen and the high ground beyond it. Ney took charge of the assault. Just as he had received his final orders from Napoleon and was leaving the glittering Headquarter Staff, he gripped Murat by the arm and exclaimed loudly, 'Come with me, Prince, and make some plans in the presence of the enemy!' It is not recorded whether Marshal Lannes laughed out loud or only internally. Murat's reply was characteristic. A few days later he wrote to Napoleon accusing Ney of requisitioning fifty thousand crowns illegally. Napoleon's reply was also characteristic. Knowing Murat and knowing Ney, he paid no attention. The attack on the bridge and the high ground was a complete success, and the red-headed Marshal who led it in person, in his full-dress marshal's uniform with the Star of the Legion of Honour blazing on his breast, was subsequently created Duke d'Elchingen. By this time, too, he had acquired another title. For his men called him 'le rougeot,' perhaps freely translatable as 'Carrots.'

The second occasion of Ney's prominence in the campaign was

when the wretched Austrian, General Mack, found himself suddenly surrounded in the Danubian town of Ulm by swarming Frenchmen, and Ney was despatched into the city to demand instant capitulation. General Mack afterwards made several plaintive remonstrances at the extraordinary violence of Marshal Ney's language on this occasion. Nevertheless, General Mack discreetly surrendered.

After the capture of Ulm, the Sixth Corps was detached from the main army and sent into the Tyrol, where its Commander won a series of skirmishes and quickly reduced the country, mainly by means of what his opponent, the Archduke John, described as 'despairing activity,' the activity being Ney's and the despair, presumably, John's. This independent excursion made the Sixth Corps miss the battle of Austerlitz, but both officers and men found a certain amount of compensation for this disaster in the young ladies of the Tyrol. At this period the redoubtable General Vandamme served for a short time under Ney, but somewhere at G.H.Q. there must have been a wise psychologist, perhaps the Emperor himself, for it was realised that Vandamme was too 'difficult' to be left for long under Ney. Vandamme was probably the toughest of all the Imperial tough nuts. Sir Walter Scott had a story that Napoleon once said, 'If I had two Vandammes, I should have to make one hang the other.'

In the campaign of 1806 Ney's private theories about warfare, inherited from 1793, came breaking through again, and from Jena to Waterloo there was never a time when they were not liable to reappear disconcertingly and sometimes disastrously.

In October, 1806, the Grand Army, in its famous lozenge formation, came pouring northwards through the Thuringian Forest, and the Prussians waited for it at Jena. In the order of battle for the 14th October, Ney was ordered to bring his corps into action on the right of Marshal Lannes. Dawn came and Ney's Corps had not arrived. Only his advance-guard, four thousand men, with the brilliant cavalryman, Colbert, was under his hand. At 6 a.m. the battle began and still the Sixth Corps was missing. Lannes advanced. The enemy was driven in, was reinforced, returned to the counter-attack. Lannes slowed down. By 8 a.m. the enemy was standing firm. Ney, child of the Revolution, Hussar of '93, could bear it no longer. A fight was on and he was out of it. Instead of waiting for his sixteen or seventeen thousand men to arrive, instead of marching to the right of Marshal Lannes, he hurled himself and his advance-guard into the fray at

the nearest gap into which he could insert himself, which happened to be on the left of Lannes.

That morning there was a thick mist to add to the fog of war. The Sixth Corps began to come marching up, and now its Commander was lost. A.D.C.'s galloped about madly for two hours looking for him, until at last one of them had an inspiration, which all of them who knew their Chief should have had two hours before, and he galloped down to the front line and found the Corps Commander leading the advance-guard in person. Then the Sixth Corps came into action and Soult's Corps and Augereau's on the left and Murat's cavalry, and the day was won.

After Napoleon's great strategical march through Thuringia, nothing could have saved the Prussian Army; however, Ney not only did his best to muddle up the actual battle, but he very nearly lost himself and his whole advance-guard. For a sudden clearing of the mist caught him in advance of Lannes, and in the presence of a powerful Prussian division. Ney's method of extrication was typical. He looked at his men and he looked at the enemy and then he shrugged his shoulders and said, '*Eh bien!* The wine is drawn. We must drink it,' and, drawing his sword he and Colbert led a smashing cavalry charge against the startled Prussians.

After Jena came the great pursuit, the bursting of the mighty wave. Ney marched swiftly to Weimar and was furious at finding Murat there. He rushed on to Erfurt and found Murat there too. From Erfurt he rushed north to Magdeburg, one hundred and twenty miles in ten days, and dammit, there was Murat again. After that they parted company, not a moment too soon for either of them. The cavalry went chasing Denmark-wards, and the surrender-expert got to work on the fortress of Magdeburg. This time it took him thirteen days of threats and bluff, but he had no siege-guns or siege-engineers and a smaller force than the garrison, and Napoleon was delighted at the capture of one of the strongest fortresses in Germany, and twenty-two thousand men, practically without a casualty. In the ghastly campaign of 1807 in the mud of Poland, Ney had the good fortune to miss the desperate carnage of Eylau, where Augereau's Corps was almost annihilated, but it was his brilliant rearguard action on the River Passarge that opened up the way to the smashing victory of Friedland. At Friedland Ney commanded the right wing with demoniac energy and recklessness, leading attack after attack in person.

'You can form no idea,' wrote Marshal Berthier, 'of the brilliant courage of Marshal Ney. It is to him chiefly that we owe the success of this memorable day.'

Then came the war in Spain, a terrible war, a war against a whole nation, against fanatical peasants, against priests and women; a war among mountains and torrents and sterile rocks; a war of assassination and starvation and torture.

During part of 1808, 1809, and part of 1810, Ney fought in Spain. He chased a Spanish army into Saragossa; he took part in the whirlwind rush across the Guadarramas to cut off Sir John Moore; he commanded on his own, efficiently and resolutely, in north-western Spain; he led his corps up the fatal hill at Busaco; he captured Ciudad Rodrigo; he fought a series of masterly rear-guard actions against Wellington; and he was ultimately sacked by Masséna for impudence and insubordination. It was the last time he led his old Sixth Corps. He had commanded it without a break since its formation, for nearly seven years, and during that time he had led it in battle faultlessly, and watched over its welfare ceaselessly. No corps was better fed or clothed or booted. He knew every officer and a great many N.C.O.'s and men by name, and when the corps was paraded to say good-bye to its Commander, there was not a face among all those tough veterans down which the tears were not running, and not a man who did not feel that something of the old glory of the Revolution was departing.

After Masséna sacked him, Ney was in disgrace. But it did not last long. Already the supreme madness was preparing, and Ney was given command of the Third Corps of the Army for Russia. Day after day the Grand Army rolled eastwards in search of an enemy. Day after day the faces of Murat, the cavalryman, and Berthier, the Chief of Staff, lengthened. Day after day, Napoleon repeated, 'On to Moscow, on to Moscow.'

At last the Russians turned and halted near the village of Borodino, where the Moscow-Smolensk road crosses the River Moscow (or Moskowa), and here on September 12, 1812, was fought a battle that made even the carnage at Eylau seem almost a skirmish. The French made no attempt to turn the Russian left flank, which Marshal Davout implored permission to do. Marshal Davout guaranteed to have thirty-five thousand men in position, under cover of woods, on the Russian flank, by six o'clock on the morning of the attack. Napoleon refused. His battle-tactics by

this time were hardening and simplifying into a new mould since Friedland and Wagram, and the gunner-Emperor was going back to his first weapon. Instead of the fast wing-turning and manœuvring and out-flanking of his earlier brilliance he was beginning to substitute the Giant Battery. Hundreds of guns, axle to axle, pounded the strongest point in the enemy line and then the infantry assaulted. It was simply siege-warfare—artillery, breach in the wall, and storming-parties. The rapier was being steadily discarded for the blunt instrument of the modern police-reports.

At Borodino the strongest point in the Russian line was the Great Redoubt, and the storming-party was led by Ney. But the Russian infantryman is a stubborn fighter in entrenchments, and the battle was long and desperate. At last the Emperor formed a super-Giant Battery of four hundred guns and smashed the Redoubt to bits. Ney's final escalade swept everything before it, and the Marshal triumphantly sent back to demand the advance of the Army Reserve, Napoleon's Imperial Guard, to finish off the shattered Russians. But the Guard was Napoleon's last cartridge. It was fresh and dry. He hesitated to fire it. 'You are eight hundred leagues from Paris,' whispered Marshal Bessières. That decided it. The Guard was held back. Red-headed Ney went almost mad with rage. For hours he had been storming at the impenetrable Redoubt, attacking, attacking and again attacking, and at last he had succeeded. All that was necessary now was a single charge by the invincible bear-skins and the Russian army would cease to exist. But the bear-skins continued to watch the performance from the back of the Grand Stand.

'Good God!' shouted Ney, storming for the first time in his life against his Emperor, 'if he's chucked soldiering, let him clear off back to the Tuileries, and leave the job to us.' And so the Russians, battered and bruised but not destroyed, slipped away and lived to fight another day.

Ney was created Prince de la Moskowa for his work on this desperate field.

The doomed army marched into Moscow, and dallied a while, and marched out homewards again. At first the weather was autumnal, but on November 6 the blue skies were suddenly enshrouded with a pall of lead, and the snow came down in huge swirling flakes, and the Russian winter began.

Marshal Davout's Corps acted as rearguard as far as Viasna

and then Ney took over from him. The great rearguard action against Empire, Starvation and Frost was on.

Ney's task was a quadruple one; he had to urge his men to keep on marching; he had to make them turn and fight at his orders; he had to employ all his immense tactical skill and experience to select the moments for marching and the moments for fighting; and, lastly, he had to take musket in hand and fight himself. All this he did for forty-three consecutive days. And all the time it snowed and snowed, and the Cossacks swarmed round, and his men starved.

During this desperate time, there was never a single outburst of the famous temper. Ney was calm and unmovable even in the tightest of corners. When Platow's cavalry suddenly swept down on his remnants through the darkening forest, Ney formed his infantry into squares and walked quietly from square to square, encouraging and inspiring. When the survivors of the corps were entirely cut off on the Dnieper from the main body, Ney led them off into the darkness without a word, and there was no man who followed him that did not trust implicitly in the silent Marshal's ability to get him out of the trap. Which he did, by an incredibly daring march across the ice of the frozen Dnieper. When Kovno was suddenly assaulted, the sorely tried rearguard bolted in panic until Ney mysteriously appeared alone, musket in hand, on the ramparts and the rearguard came tumbling back.

The Russians gave up the pursuit at the Niemen river. They, and the Russian winter, had defeated the Emperor and King Murat, and the Grand Army, and the Old Guard, and all the glittering Marshals, save only Ney—Duke, Prince, and son of a Saarlouis barrel-cooper.

On that day came to an end the brilliance of Michel Ney. From 1793 to 1812—just nineteen years—he had hardly put a foot wrong. For nineteen years he had always been the same—resolute, efficient and fast. Now that was all over.

In the campaign of 1813, in Saxony, Ney was irresolute, uncertain and slow. Time after time the Emperor planned vast, overwhelming combinations, and time after time they failed, or half-failed, because Ney misunderstood his orders, or marched slowly. At Bautzen he blundered, at Wachau he dallied, and at Dennewitz he was utterly defeated.

Wounded at Leipzig in 1813, he rejoined in time to command a handful in the defence of Paris in 1814, and then suddenly he

abandoned the game. It was Ney, the unshakable, who admitted defeat. It was Ney, the taciturn, who led the deputation of Marshals to Napoleon. It was Ney, the faithful, who insisted upon Napoleon's abdication.

'The Army will obey me!' cried the Emperor.

'The Army will obey the Marshals,' shouted Ney, and that ended it. Napoleon went to Elba. But he came back.

In March, 1815, Ney rushed wildly off to Provence crying, 'I will bring the wild beast to Paris in an iron cage.' But at the inn of the 'Golden Apple' at Lons-le-Saulnier, two muffled strangers, ex-officers of the Imperial Guard, came late at night with a scrawled note:

'Meet me at Châlons. I shall receive you as I did on the day after the Moskowa. N.'

Ney spent a sleepless night, wrestling feverishly with his loyalties. It never occurred to him to do what scores were doing all round him, and simply resign his command. 'I was in a storm, and I lost my head,' he said afterwards.

Next morning, wild, haggard, gloomy, he assembled his troops, three thousand strong, and read the first words of a proclamation which he had written during the night: 'The cause of the Bourbons is lost for ever——' The rest was drowned in a thunderous 'Vive l'Empereur!'

That night he gave a dinner-party and sat like a skeleton at the feast. In Paris he wrote a strange political pamphlet full of advice for the Emperor, and the stories about him were so peculiar that people thought he was mad, and it was only by chance that Napoleon gave him a command at all in the army of Waterloo.

At Quatre Bras Ney made every imaginable blunder. He advanced slowly, he wasted time, he made no reconnaissances—shades of Captain Ney of the army of the Sambre-et-Meuse!—and finally destroyed Napoleon's chances of victory by flying into an ungovernable passion and actually countermanding the Emperor's orders that D'Erlon should march to Ligny. As a result D'Erlon marched and counter-marched all day and did not fire a shot, and Blücher was saved from annihilation and Waterloo was lost.

Ney cannot be blamed for the actual handling of the great frontal attack at Waterloo. Napoleon had long since given up manœuvring on the field of battle. His tactics at Friedland, Wagram, and Borodino were the same; massed batteries and frontal attacks. Ney may have launched his cavalry too soon and

the Guard too late. But the main responsibility for the failure was Napoleon's.

In the evening of that day the Guard recoiled, and Ney was left to fight his last rearguard action, roaring, 'Come and see how a Marshal of France can die.' But all fled and no bullet hit him, and he was left alone in the darkness to tramp slowly back towards Genappe.

That was the military career of the Duke of Elchingen, and on it history has recorded its verdict. Twenty years of brilliance are ignored, and Saxony and Quatre Bras alone are taken into consideration.

But there is an explanation which covers both the twenty years and the two years, which reconciles the dashing captain and the timid commander, and which accounts equally for the years of steadiness and the months of wildness. It is an explanation which could only have been put forward since the war of 1914-18. It is simply this, that after 1812 Ney had shell-shock. The pre-war historian never thought of this explanation, but then the pre-war historian had never heard of shell-shock. The skirmishes of the middle and late nineteenth century—Inkerman, Gravelotte, Omdurman, Majuba Hill and Spion Kop—were his only material of comparison, and they were all short and sharp. Ney had been at it for twenty years when he marched out of Vilna on the road to Moscow. Even before he was called upon for such unparalleled and imperishable exertions, he must have been suffering from war-weariness. Soldiers aged quickly in those days. The Emperor was lethargic at forty-four, Masséna exhausted at fifty-one. 'I shall soon be rewarding you,' said Napoleon to General Colbert. 'Make haste, sire,' replied Colbert, 'for though I am not yet thirty I feel I am growing old.'

And then on the top of those twenty years of war came the Russian retreat and for the short rest of his life Ney was a totally different man. Timid, cautious, careless of military technique, wildly excitable, quickly despairing, dabbling in politics, hysterical, offensive and disobedient to the Emperor, he displayed all the symptoms, so familiar to our generation, of intense shell-shock and war-weariness. At Friedland in 1807 he led the crucial attacks like a brilliant tactician; at Waterloo in 1815 he was seen by an English officer striking an English cannon with his sword like a maniac. And it must be remembered that Ney was essentially a front-line man. He preferred to lead his men from in front with

a sword, not from a distant hill-top with a pair of field-glasses, and this must have inevitably have added to the desperate strain of those twenty years. There were only three other front-line marshals out of the twenty-six—Augereau, who threw his hand in from sheer exhaustion before the end; Lannes, killed in 1809 at Aspern-Essling; and Murat; and Murat's end was very like Ney's—a wild, hysterical, indecisive, shilly-shallying and blundering, for the final months, and then a firing-squad.

Thus out of these four, one was killed in action, and the other three exhibited the identical symptoms of shell-shock. It is an irresistible conclusion. Nothing else can cover the facts. Nothing else can explain the extraordinary transition from the Ney of Valmy and Moscow, to the Ney of Dennewitz and Quatre Bras.

Now that a generation, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the remnant of a generation, exists to-day with a full and first-hand knowledge of what intensive and prolonged warfare can do to a man's character, there is a very good chance that Michel Ney may recover in the eyes of historians the reputation as a strong and skilful soldier that he enjoyed in the eyes of the greatest of all soldiers.

THINGS THAT ARE RARE.

WITH AN EDITORIAL MEMORY

GIVEN two days' holiday, promise of fine weather and a reliable car, the problem of how to make the best use of the precious hours should not be difficult to solve. Yet thousands, after long discussion, give it up and seek an arterial highway which ends in a maze of piers, bathing machines, side-shows and human beings.

But one small section of the community find no difficulty in selecting an itinerary. They are the students of nature, the bird-lovers, the botanists. For them there is always some spot on the map which is known to harbour something rare.

Our collection of British Flora reflected the effort and travel of many years, but away in the West there were rare plants still undiscovered, so our problem was quickly solved, and we were on the road long before the June sun had dissipated the morning mist.

The massive towers of Winchester Cathedral stood out grandly as we topped the last hill before running down into the picturesque main street and, after Winchester, there was Salisbury, also making urgent appeal to tarry and renew acquaintance with its special treasure.

Then Shaftesbury, proudly perched on a hill-top and, after Shaftesbury, the quiet winding road to Shepton Mallet, which led us to a land of bright colour, where all the roadside walls are decked with Yellow Sedum, splashed occasionally with the rich red Valerian.

A land, too, of rare buildings. The most unrepentant speed merchant must slow down before the church tower at Bruton and that little gem at Evercreech.

We emerged from this lovely stretch to find Wells lying below us, and soon were running slowly under the Chain Gate and looking at 'one of the greater glories of England and the world.' Only a glimpse, as our first port of call still lay far to the westward and, after leaving the peaceful old city, we put on speed and were soon through Axbridge and seeking the road that would lead to Brean Down. At this stage our map failed us, and one of the roads we took ended suddenly in a field, but we eventually arrived at the foot of the Down and were soon off in eager pursuit of its treasure. And on the top, rambling amongst the rocks, we found what we had come for, the White Rock Rose of Brean.

We descended triumphant and, as the day was still young, took

the road for Cheddar and, at the top of the magnificent pass, spied the little pink flowers that take their name from the Gorge and are found nowhere else. The Rose of Brean and the Dianthus of the Gorge, this was good hunting. We lay that night at Wells, and next morning walked through the Green Close and stood awhile before the great West Front of the Cathedral, one of the rarest and most beautiful things in the world. Afterwards, we passed into that building of perfect proportions, its beauties revealed by the sunlight filtering through the green and gold window. 'Immortal and perfect loveliness, a thing beyond criticism and praise.' The historian has not exaggerated.

Our homeward route ran eastwards through rolling pasture-land and then up on to the high downs by Mere, Wylke and Amesbury.

We returned satisfied that we had once again found the right solution to the problem.

A deer-stalker in the Highlands may think a little pink flower is a poor thing to hunt, but the big-game man thinks little of red deer, and the head hunter smiles contemptuously at the man who is content to stalk dumb animals.

It is all a matter of degree. At the end of a long trek there may be only a rare piece of Ming, the note of a rare bird, or the sight of a rare plant; or there may be a record head.

Next year I go to a far country in search of big game and shall have to forgo further search of England for awhile.

I am glad, because the standard is now so high. I know a Cornish stream where a minute and rare plant can be found; I know a high Scotch mountain that shelters something rarer than the Cheddar Pink; England can boast of many cathedrals, each with its own rare features.

But it will be difficult to find again a corner of England that can show so many things that are rare.

W. M. J.

I was pleased beyond ordinary measure when this little paper came into my hands. Anything that reveals how the love of living nature can break through the hard pressure of the times revives one's spirits. There is something vital in the simple quest of this living beauty. It is linked with the discovery of a rainbow quality superadded, as it were, to the strict balance of profit and loss in Nature's stern accountancy. Though it may be but a reflection of purely human appreciations, it tends to return upon the heart

almost as if it were a reverberation from the elemental powers themselves. A Wordsworth would feel in it not merely the law of submission to the irrevocable order of things, but an effectual sympathy between human affections and the gentler aspects of that order. Philosophise or not, the love of beauty in nature sets afoot a quest that at the lowest justifies itself in that it quickens the inward eye and makes life the more worth living.

Apart from this, I have a special personal interest in the fact that it is a pendant to an unexpected encounter in an unspoilt corner of England. My wife and I were motoring down one day in early summer, seven years ago, to some friends on the other side of the New Forest. Lunch-time found us in a Hampshire road that ran through a charming woodland. Trees and coppices covered the higher slopes on either side; close to the road were clearer stretches of grass starred with flowers, inviting a halt and picnic. A little way on another small car was drawn up by the roadside; others, it seemed, had also felt the charm of the place. They emerged from the wood—two children with their governess, and, closer to us, their father. As I got out of the car, I espied the graceful stem and leafy necklet of a plant familiar in gardens but a rare native. 'Look! Solomon's Seal!' I called to my wife. The stranger could not but hear, and coming up with a little sheaf of flowers in his hand, asked to be shown where the Solomon's Seal was, and further enquired if, knowing as it seemed so much about plants, I could tell him the names of one or two among the flowers in his hand. Luckily my knowledge held out, and we fell into talk about the Surrey and Hampshire flora; the nearest spot within an afternoon's run to find the sundew, the bee orchis, or the orchis with the 'scorched' flower-tip; about the field above a certain bridge over the infant Wey where *Morio*, the green-winged orchis, abounds in its season; the other wet meadow where the monkshood has escaped from a garden and makes a brilliant belt of royal blue alongside a little stream, carrying the eye on to the soft and distant blueness of the ridge that breaks the far skyline, all the length of Hindhead leisurely mounting to its double crest; or further east, the wood on the North Downs where in its hundreds the glorious White Helleborine grows two foot high; the sheltered stretch of the ancient Pilgrims' Way where under a certain thorn-tree a clump of the queer little Green Man orchis grows—or, shall I rather say used to grow year after year, for though the hand of the builder has not yet deflowered all the green quietude of the Pilgrims' Way,

yet the hand of Time and still more the ruthless fingers of holiday-makers and school children in the raw pursuit of 'Nature Study,' work many and irreparable changes. On Hindhead, the last wild kingfern vanished from the Devil's Punchbowl in 1888; the lovely Wintergreen, lovely too in its classical name of *Pyrola*, perhaps survives in that hidden wood near Witley, for it is a private wood, happily; but where are the little colonies of the wild columbine, so carefully watched a generation ago in Prior's Wood? And does the giant *Elecampane*, obvious escape from some medieval garden of medicinal herbs, still flaunt its face of rather shabby gold in the lane where you climb over into that same meadow where its fellow escape, the monkshood, making cerulean harmony with the distant hills, justifies by its flowers as well as its magical juice, the fair name of *belladonna*?

My new friend, I gathered from his talk, must certainly be an officer of some kind in His Majesty's forces, on leave between spells of service, and for a fresh interest, plunging with all a neophyte's enthusiasm into the joys of field botany: the identification of the thousand 'Flowers of the Field,' the wide ranging hunt, though with merciful hand, for the rarer things in their habitats recorded by Bentham and Hooker. From a home-point somewhere, it was clear, on the slopes of Hindhead, a small car could range over many miles of good hunting country: not indeed so far as that guarded field where there blooms a braver multitude of those white and purple fritillaries than

The grassy harvest of the river-fields

Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields,

nor the northern river with its bank richly massed with the Giant *Campanula*, blue and white, but varied country of down and heath, of meadow and woodland, north over the chalk to the London clay, south across the Gault and the Greensands and the Weald clay to the southern chalk again, even down to the sea-shore and the saltings, each tract marked by its own specialties.

Talk done, they went their way; we stayed for a latish lunch. Thereafter strolling round, we came upon a large rug, obviously their picnic seat in the damp grass, forgotten in the after-lunch flower hunt. It was too late to give chase; they had miles of start; besides, we were going southwards, they north. Better to take it with us to the New Forest and come home by way of my kinsfolk at Hindhead, where it must be easy to track him down.

At Hindhead our indications were instantly recognised. The trail was clear, and as we drew up outside his gate there he was, getting his own car ready to spend that free afternoon in revisiting the wood where, if no passing gipsy had appropriated it, the rug might still be lying. By a happy chance, we were just in time; by happier chance still, when we were bidden in for a cup of tea, his wife turned out to be an old school friend of my wife. Really the long arm of coincidence had stretched to incredible lengths.

Sequel—a tie of common interest and some correspondence until a fresh spell of active service called my friend far afield. Meanwhile the time of waiting had not hung heavy on his hands. His hobby provided him with endless interest and occupation, all the pleasures of the chase and a constant lure for exploring the countryside all through the year. One letter tells the tale of a short August holiday in Cornwall which incidentally added fifty-eight new items to the book of 'finds.' As to the rarities, some were very rare! It was a chequered tale. 'You might be amused,' he wrote, 'by our experience in endeavouring to find *Corrigiola littoralis*, Strapwort. Both our books said it only grew in one place, on the bar of Loe Pool, Helston. So away we went and hunted high and low on the bar. Not a sign. A few days later I went to the library at Falmouth and found a book, *Cornish Flora*, and there I read that owing to alterations in the bar the plant had in 1906 disappeared to such an extent that two *botanists* only found *one* plant!!'

Here the fault was clearly nature's; hopes were dashed by no human oversight. But human oversight could be responsible also. 'Another crash was over Balm. I did not read with sufficient care and the information I brought away was "at the Vicarage at Manaccan and the parish of Perranzabuloe." So off we went to the Vicarage, ran into the Vicar, and he led us to *Balm*. It looked very small! But we brought it away and after much searching found it was *Melissa officinalis*—a garden escape—not even mentioned in our book.'

Flower-chasers know well the treachery of the months, the early or the late season that cheats the searcher; the swift withering of the leaves that after flowering takes the plant out of the field of vision; the discovery of a belated bloom where least expected, a straggler from its usual haunts. Even Cornwall does not enjoy perennial spring to keep flowers in perennial bloom. Perhaps this was why my friend has to confess 'we nearly came away without Cornish Moneywort (*Sibthorpia*). Our books said "clothes the

banks of most Cornish streams," but it defied us till the last day.'

Most of the fifty-eight finds recorded must have been local rather than rare, part of the rich harvest always to be expected in our western counties. 'The only uncommon things we found were *Linaria repens*, which we found on the roadside, and Balm-leaved Figwort. But many other things we hoped to find would not appear in the places we walked.'

Now my friend has sent me this other record of his recent flower-hunting which displays for us that to-day, despite the despoiling of the countryside and the confluent eruptions of bricks and mortar under such seductive names as Little Palaces of Pedlington or Cosy Castles of Gander's Green, there are still patches of English country left, still unravished hills and dales where the rarer natives continue to hold their own. A precarious tenure, perhaps, for there are those detestable pirates who, hearing of a beautiful wild flower somewhere that could be transferred to their own gardens, instantly swoop down in their cars and dig up every specimen they can find, dig them up murderously in full bloom, as no true garden-lover should. So it was with the exquisite Spring Snowflake a few years ago. A rash enthusiast wrote to the papers, naming the valley which it made lovely; the very next week-end scores of motorists raided the place with trowels and baskets. They dug up flowers and bulbs; nothing was spared. When the wretched enthusiast went there the next afternoon, only two plants were discoverable far up the valley. Waste and folly—barbarous waste and pitiful folly, this rape of loveliness by body-snatchers. England is the poorer for their brutish greed. Switzerland has its law against such uprootings, and the people see to it that the law is kept; we have not yet educated our much-taught folk to defend their rich inheritance of beauty against these ghouls of the countryside. Some rare things, and those the brightest, have been safely multiplied by our own garden providers; for the rest, safety lies in obscurity; the little treasures one may dare to mention are those that would make no show in a garden; they are of no money value to the nurseryman's collector; they are not conspicuous enough to tempt the garden-ghoul. To name them here is not to endanger their existence; those only are likely to seek them out who are true lovers of their unobtrusive perfection undisturbed in their native setting.

LEONARD HUXLEY.

THE SPELL OF THE JUNGLE.

BY A. A. IRVINE.

'AHE! . . . little one! Art thou the daughter of Mangla, *gameh*?'

Alkhi stopped milking the goat and, clasping the heavy brass bowl, rose and solemnly regarded the speaker from the top of the mound on which her father's hut was built. Never had she seen anyone so splendid as the big fair-haired man on the great bay Waler.

Compared with her own short-statured jungle-folk, he was a giant. The sun-glint of impatiently tossed bridle, of silver watch-chain looped from the pocket of the rider's khaki shooting-coat, pleased her. Here was one partaking of the nature of a god!

Brian rode slowly up the mound to where the slim brown girl in a scrap of blue skirt and little yellow jacket was standing, dismounted and repeated his question.

Alkhi nodded shyly and lowered her bowl to the ground.

'Run, then, tell thy father that Stockleigh Sahib would speak with him. Canst thou remember?'

Alkhi nodded again. 'Tockli Sahib,' she imitated. She giggled, the name tickled her fancy. She saw that the eyes in the sun-tanned face of the god were kindly. 'Tockli Sahib,' she said again, and sped in the direction of the scanty rice-patches which framed the margin of the river.

Brian hitched the reins over a branch of a mango-tree and commenced to fill his pipe. For three years he had been an Assistant Conservator of Forests in Central India, but this was his first tour in the Ratholi District. At dawn he had left his tents, to discuss with the headmen of villages within his charge matters concerned with grazing-dues.

Mangla, Alkhi's father, was a *gameh*, headman, of a *pāl* of fifty families of Bhil tribesmen. The *pāl* straggled along a jungle-track, each hut surrounded by a lofty stockade of bamboo and thorn-bush, protection against the onslaught of wild beasts.

The high grass parted on the far side of the track, and Alkhi reappeared with her father. Mangla was a wiry, beady-eyed man, his face pitted with smallpox. A noted *shikāri*, across one cheek ran a long-healed seam scored by a panther's claw. For dignity's

sake he wore a cotton coat, in addition to his loin-cloth, and a dingy turban covered his grizzled locks.

He made his *salām*, and the two men settled themselves in the grateful shade of a mango-clump. Alkhi brought parched maize and sweetened milk, and squatted down to watch with intent black eyes the god-like being who held converse with her father.

There was in her observation something of awe. It was common knowledge that a god would at times assume the semblance of a man. From earliest infancy she had been reared in an atmosphere of superstition. At the hour of her birth a lucky iron spike had lain by her mother's bedside. To avert the Evil Eye, her baby eyelids had been rubbed with antimony. As she grew older, she learnt that spirits, good and bad, were everywhere: in a gnarled tree-trunk, twisted to the likeness of a tiger, in a rock, weather-worn to human shape. Animals, she knew, could speak, and had a Rajah of their own.

For her the vast mysterious jungle held nothing of terror. There were in it snakes and tigers: one went warily because of them. But the rasping cough of a questing panther, the trumpet alarm-call of a *sāmbār* stag crashing through the undergrowth, were ordinary sounds. Mangla would rise grumbling, stoke the watch-fire and roll himself again in his blanket.

Against demons and witches the village safeguard was Hakra, the *bhumia*, part priest, part medicine-man. He was rather a favourite with Alkhi, whose faith in his powers as a magician was unbounded.

His business concluded, Brian rose to go. Mangla led forward the horse. The discussion had not been wholly concerned with village affairs!

'Assuredly, the first news of a tiger shall be given to the Sahib,' Mangla promised.

'That is well!' Brian looked across at Alkhi standing by the wicket-gate. 'There is no son of thine house?'

The *gamelī* shook his head sorrowfully. 'Nay, Sahib. When Kālī, the goddess, ordained the cholera sickness, it slew both my women and the man-child also. In vain did we send forth the white kid garlanded with flowers. There remains only Alkhi.'

'Then must she be married speedily!' Brian counselled. 'So mayest thou obtain a grandson, to make sure thine entry into Paradise.'

There was an elfin charm, he thought, about the slim girl in the blue skirt and yellow jacket. He leaned from the saddle and flipped a shining rupee to fall at her feet.

'For sweetmeats, little one!' he called cheerily. 'Let thy father, one day, bring thee to see the wonders of my camp.'

Alkhi *saldm*-ed; but the coin lay where it had fallen. Her gaze was riveted on the horse and its rider till they vanished amid the teak-trees.

She turned and passed through the stockade into the hut. Busied with household duties, her face was sombre with thought. Her marriage! . . . she had often heard it debated. From birth she had been destined for Goma, son of the headman of a neighbouring village. Like most Bhil maidens, accustomed to be bound in wedlock at an age shocking to Western notions, she had viewed the prospect with indifference. But now . . . she did not wish to marry Goma! She would entreat her father; he was always kind to her.

And that night, while Brian smoked his after-dinner pipe outside his tents in the starlight, a childish figure was prostrating itself before a vermilion-daubed rock set in a dusky grove. Beside it lay the customary offerings; tiny platters of onions and rice and coco-nut. Alkhi was vowing herself to the service of her newly found god. Her right hand held entwined twin stalks of the sacred *darbha* grass, binding her spirit to his.

Mangla's village was in the heart of the tiger-country, and Stockleigh would arrange his tours accordingly.

His favourite camping-ground was by the margin of a spacious tank girdled with tamarind-trees. Out on the glittering surface of the water were grey geese and teal; and at dawn there came booming the tremulous cries of the great *Sarus* cranes, always in pairs, the Hindu prototype of conjugal affection.

At night, when ghostly moonlight poured over the forest, when there was silence, save for the distant howling of a jackal-pack scurrying headlong to a carrion feast, Brian and Mangla would sit planning the next day's hunting. And Alkhi would come always with her father, laden with wild flowers for Pir Khan, bearded and hawk-nosed, Brian's body-servant, to decorate the Sahib's table.

To the scandal of the village she had, so far, prevailed on her father to postpone her marriage with Goma; though that discomfited swain came wooing after the prescribed fashion, bearing fruit and grilled mice wrapped in a fresh green leaf.

Sometimes Mangla brought with him Hakra, the *bhumia*, emaciated, bleary-eyed, wagging a long white beard, as befitted a sorcerer. In the rainy season it was Hakra who gathered handfuls of hailstones, smeared them with sacrificial blood and tossed them into the air to rattle down harmlessly upon the dead teak-leaves, bidding them thenceforward fall not upon the crops. Charms and simples formed part of his stock-in-trade; for payment he would weave love-spells of potent efficacy.

Crouched over the embers of the camp-fire, he would narrate strange fragments of jungle-lore: how the spirit of a man slain by a tiger rides always on his slayer's head, inciting it to bloodshed, guiding it from danger. He would tell the tale of Raghu, the washerman, changed to a tiger by the eating of a root, whose wife fled terrified, taking with her the root which was the antidote!

Alkhi would smile scornfully. Not thus would she have failed her man in his time of trouble!

She had passed her fourteenth year when her courage was put to the proof. Mangla had sent her with a message to the camp drowsing in an afternoon siesta. Brian, weary after a long morning in the saddle, was asleep under a *pipal*-tree.

As she drew near, wondering whether to wake him, her glance fell on a coil that glistened in the sunlight, wreathed in the short grass close to the sleeper's head. She did not hesitate. Snatching up a stick, with the noiseless tread of a padding leopard she crept stealthily forward.

She struck; and, instantly erect upon its coils, the cobra lunged with a lightning thrust. But her aim had been true, and she smote again and again as Brian, awakened, scrambled to his feet and realised what this child, for so he still considered her, had dared for him.

'Thou hast saved my life!' he declared, his hands grasping her slender shoulders. 'If I had stirred and touched it . . . ! Wast thou not afraid?'

Alkhi looked worshippingly up at him.

'I thought but of thy peril, Sahib!'

'And not of thine own! A worthy daughter, indeed, of Mangla, *shikari*! Listen! For thy father there shall be a fitting reward . . . for owning such a daughter! For thyself a golden bangle, such as the white memsahibs wear. Tell me, will that please thee?'

Alkhi, half child, half woman, delightedly assented. A golden bangle . . . ! Yet, the woman feeling in her was the stronger. Exultantly she was reflecting that now, more than ever, he belonged to her !

In due course, Rùpji, Forest Guard, bore from headquarters a sealed packet, lettered with the name of a Bombay firm of jewellers. Alkhi tore off the wrappings and, to Rùpji's goggling amazement, drew forth a heavy gold bangle.

Enraptured, she slipped the ornament up a slender arm, turned it about to make it shine in the moonlight.

'A gift from Tockli Sahib !' she proudly announced.

Rùpji answered : 'That do I know. Doubtless, a gift to thee for the good hunting planned by thy father. This, also, do I know . . . that it came with a letter to the new Sahib, who is now in Tockli Sahib's place.'

Alkhi's eyes widened with dismay.

'The new Sahib . . . ?' she faltered.

'Thou hast not heard ? Tockli Sahib, taking one year's leave from the Government, has gone to his own country.'

'Tockli Sahib is . . . gone ?' she faltered again.

Rùpji, hungry for his supper, grunted surlily.

'Must I tell thee a thousand times ? He is gone. And now I depart, also. To-morrow, having fulfilled the new Sahib's order, I will return and make report.'

He left her, and with a sob choked in her throat, Alkhi flew along the jungle-track to the hut of Hakra, the *bhumia*.

She found the old man squatting on the turf outside his dwelling. Often for hours would he sit thus, motionless ; as all the village believed, communing with the gods.

Alkhi sprang forward, in breathless supplication.

'*Bhumia* !' she cried. 'Make me a spell !'

Hakra came gaping out of his trance.

'A spell ? A love-spell ? Has Goma, then . . . ?'

Scornfully she burst out : 'What is Goma to me ? . . . Nevertheless, the affair concerns a man !'

'A man, sayest thou ? Who, then ?'

The great dark eyes in the small eager face looked straight into the *bhumia*'s wizened countenance.

'Tockli Sahib !' she whispered.

'Tockli Sahib?' Hakra regarded her, astounded. His next question was vibrant with curiosity. 'What has the Sahib been to thee?'

'Naught! And less than naught! . . . though, had he willed it . . .' She broke off abruptly. '*Bhumia!* Make me a spell!'

'To what end shall the spell be?'

Her answer came, fierce with her longing: 'That he abide for ever in the jungle!'

Hakra protested: 'Daughter, this is foolishness. It is heard that the Sahib has gone to his own country. Who can say whether he will return?'

Alkhi cried passionately: 'Are the gods, then, powerless in such matters? Make me a spell, *Bhumia*, that he return, that he may never again depart!'

Hakra stared, aghast. Her slight frame quivered with excitement. He had known the girl all her life: a quiet maiden, seemingly passionless. But now . . . !

For a while he pondered, perplexed, fingering his long carved necklace. She was the headman's daughter. He was Hakra, the sorcerer, with his reputation to consider. At all events, the Sahib would not return for a year.

At length he spoke. 'There might, indeed, be contrived such a spell,' he began, with slow deliberation, 'but as for the cost thereof . . .'

Alkhi wrenched from her arm the golden bangle, thrust it in front of him.

'See! I give this!' she cried. 'It was he who sent it! Now shall it draw him back to me!'

The old man's gaze grew covetous. With a claw-like hand he clutched and tucked the ornament within a fold of his waist-cloth.

'Go in peace, daughter!' he admonished. 'It shall be done even as thou desirest.'

Without a word she went swiftly homewards through the shadows under the trees.

But when the monsoon rains had fallen, and the dank mists billowed upwards from the rice-fields, Kàli, the goddess, sent fever ravening through the villages.

Alkhi fell sick; and Mangla learnt that soon there would be no woman in his house to cook for him. Under a coarse cotton

quilt, in a narrow room lighted by the smoky flare of an earthenware lamp, a wasted form tossed restlessly.

'Tockli Sahib!' she murmured. '*Hae! Hae!* Tockli Sahib!'

At length there was silence. There was no sound, except the drip and patter from the eaves, when Alkhi's yearning spirit passed with the dawn.

A year later, Stockleigh returned from furlough, bringing with him his wife.

He was frankly delighted to be back at his job; and Joan quickly fitted into her new life. The small white colony at headquarters gave a warm welcome to the tall, brown-haired girl, whose steady grey eyes humorously surveyed her strange surroundings. Her chief friends were Norah Durrant, whose husband was in the Police, and Doctor McClintock, the genial Civil Surgeon.

There were shooting and tennis parties, bridge and gramophone dances; but most of all she enjoyed the early morning rides with Brian, when the wild pig were still rooting in the fields, and she might chance on jungle scenes interesting to a novice . . . a crocodile sliding from a mud-bank into the river, a hyena skulking home from his night-prowl through the sweet-smelling *karunda*-bushes.

She had a gift for languages, and was soon capable of supervising the invaluable Pir Khan and his fellow-servants in the thatched bungalow standing in a garden of tropical luxuriance.

Mangla had lost no time in paying his respects; and from him Brian first learnt of the death of Alkhi. He was very genuinely grieved. 'Such a good little sort!' he said to Joan, regretfully. 'I've told you how, on one occasion, she probably saved my life?'

For a time Joan was perfectly happy; and then, for no reason that she could at first comprehend, a vague feeling of disquietude began to oppress her. She never admitted this to Brian. She fought against it, scolding herself for being absurdly fanciful. But the feeling persisted, grew stronger; and at length, with an almost painful shock of surprise, she realised its origin.

An increasing, groundless terror of the Jungle! It was not that she felt lonely, that she dwelt in a region steeped in superstition. The jungle-lore about spirits and demons had interested, often amused her. No; it was an utterly unreasonable fear of the Jungle *itself*!

She admitted its beauty in sunshine, in moonlight. But it seemed to her the fatal beauty of a Vampire-Woman, luring her worshippers to destruction, barring their escape!

And Brian loved it!

A few days afterwards, on the way to her first tiger-shoot from where they were camped on tour, Brian showed her something which confirmed her sense of the jungle's ruthlessness.

News had been coming in of 'tiger-rolls' in the grass, of pug-marks at the bottom of sandy watercourses; and at last Mangla sent word of the slaying of the young buffalo tied as a bait. A ten-foot tiger, worthy of the Sahib!

As they rode out to their *machān*, a villager's string bedstead lashed across the boughs of a giant tree, parrots and monkeys were chattering in the forest, the deer were calling along the river-banks. At a spot where the track widened, Brian pointed to a mound, with a small head-stone, beneath the spreading branches of a *banyan*.

'Mannering's grave,' he said. 'He was killed out shooting, and the jungle folk were too superstitious to carry his dead body. So he was buried there. His pals put up the stone afterwards.'

At sight of the lonely mound Joan shivered involuntarily. The jungle still held Mannering!

The sun had risen by the time they reached their halting-place. They dismounted and climbed upwards through a network of deep, water-worn ravines. Brian dismissed the guide, and, taking both rifles, helped Joan to scale the flimsy bamboo ladder to the *machān*.

From their eyrie they could see below them the remains of the slaughtered buffalo. But for the creaking of the dry bamboos in the hot wind, there was scarcely a sound. There ensued a period of waiting.

Then, all at once, ahead of them pandemonium was let loose. Drums thudded, rattles jarred, as the line of beaters advanced, hacking a path through the dense undergrowth, howling abuse at the tiger's remotest ancestors!

Joan, her lips parted with excitement, watched a peacock, a streak of purple and gold, soar from a ravine-edge, a bushy-tailed red dog lope to the sanctuary of a thicket.

The din grew nearer, as the gorged tiger, roused from his slumbers, stalked savagely onwards. Above him, on all sides, peering downwards through the leaves, were small, brown, naked men, coughing and tapping upon tree-trunks; the 'stops,' posted to steer him to where death lurked on the leaf-hidden *machān*.

A troop of frightened monkeys raced jabbering overhead. Brian touched Joan on the arm: the tiger was coming! A moment later, a shattering roar burst from the bushes, and a huge yellow body plunged from a bank and flashed across the open space below their shelter. At the same instant came the report of Brian's 'express.'

Joan cried: 'Oh! . . . he's gone!' But her husband, slipping in a fresh cartridge, laughed elatedly.

'He won't go far! A fine skin for your drawing-room, Joan! We must take care those ruffians of beaters don't steal his whiskers. Chopped up and swallowed with water, they're believed to have magical properties!' From close by came the furious rumble of the wounded beast, as he tore the earth and worried sticks and stones. Gradually, the growling died away.

For another half-hour they waited, till Brian grew impatient.

'What a time those fellows are taking!' he grumbled. He picked up his rifle. 'I'm going down.'

'Oh, Brian! Is it safe?'

'Rather! There's not been a sound . . . still, we'll make sure.'

He fired into the long grass, but nothing stirred. He climbed down the ladder and looked at her. "When Mangla comes," he directed, 'tell him to fetch our water-bottles.'

She saw him clamber to the ravine-top, disappear in a thick tangle of *jāman*-bushes. She did not see what happened next. She heard only the hoarse, coughing roar and Brian's shout, as the great yellow bulk launched itself from the grass and bore him backwards.

For a few seconds she remained panic-stricken; then she summoned up her courage. She must do something! Brian was down there!

With a cry, echoed by the beaters, she scrambled to the ground, and round the corner of a rock came suddenly upon Brian, prostrate, the beast half over him, its teeth sunk in his shoulders. Its head lifted with a snarl, as she sprang forward, jammed her rifle against the tawny skull and fired. Trembling and ashen-faced, she was leaning against the rock, when Mangla and his men broke through the bushes. With a grunt of admiration at her pluck, Mangla went down on his knees and began to suck the poison from the wound.

Water poured over his head, and native liquor down his throat, brought Brian back to consciousness.

'I'm so sorry, darling!' he gasped to Joan, bandaging his shoulder. 'You'll have to get me back to headquarters. Send Mangla on ahead to warn Doctor McClintock.'

Soon afterwards, bearing the litter improvised from branches, with a cloth by way of a canopy against the pitiless sun, the slow procession started. Villages were far apart; it was not easy to find water for the sick man babbling in delirium. At times he seemed gripped by a sudden fear. 'You'll get me back?' he would cry, and Joan would reassure him.

By nightfall they reached a forest rest-house perched on a hill. Till dawn they could go no farther. Joan, forcing herself to eat, dismissed Pir Khan and nerved herself for the night-vigil beside her husband's bed, placed to catch the faint breeze on the verandah.

The thumping of tom-toms, celebrating a rustic wedding, ceased in the hamlet below the rest-house. Moonlight, a stream of molten silver, was shed over the low hills. All around stretched, league upon league, the Jungle . . . the remorseless, vampire Jungle that was robbing her of her man!

From time to time she laid damp cloths on his burning forehead, moistened his lips with water. For a while he would lie quiet; then waken, muttering, to partial consciousness.

She rose to fetch a fresh supply of water, and his voice came, harsh with a shuddering fear:

'My God! They're keeping me here!'

Brian was sitting bolt upright, staring terrified at the dark, rolling expanse of forest. She knelt down by the bedside.

'Darling,' she urged him, 'tell me what's troubling you?'

He went on muttering: 'There's something . . . holding me! I can't get out!'

She soothed him, struggling herself against an uncanny feeling of helplessness. She saw again that lonely grave under the *banyan*-tree. With all the power of her will she thrust aside her weakness, and her arm went round him.

'Brian!' she cried. 'You're mine! . . . do you hear me? You're mine, my darling! I will not let you go!'

He turned his head slowly and looked at her, smiled and fell back upon the pillows.

Pir Khan woke early in the servants' quarters, yawned, cracked his knuckles to prevent a devil's hopping down his throat, and ordered the litter to be made ready.

He strode up the pathway to the verandah, *salâm*-ed and placed an earthenware bowl on the table.

'For the Sahib, fresh buffalo milk cooled down a well,' he announced with satisfaction. His eyes shifted from the woman, numb with fatigue and misery, to the white, still form on the bed, and he made a sorrowful gesture of respect.

'*Inshallah!* It is the will of Allah!' he declared solemnly.

His words roused Joan from her torpor. For the past two hours Brian had not stirred. Pir Khan, obviously, deemed him dying . . . or dead! The thought of it appalled her! If the men who bore the litter should suspect . . . !

She spoke peremptorily. 'Listen, Pir Khan! The Sahib sleeps. He *sleeps* . . . dost thou understand? When the litter is ready, we will place him in it, thou and I, screening it over with a sheet, lest the carriers . . . lest the carriers disturb him.'

'The order of the Memsahiba is understood,' Pir Khan assured her gravely. 'Doubtless, the Sahib sleeps. I go to give the men instructions.'

Readily he had divined her meaning. He, too, knew well how easily a pack of ghost-ridden Bhil villagers might be scared into scuttling like rabbits back to their burrows.

To Joan, riding alongside the rocking, creaking palanquin, the last stage of the journey seemed like one through Eternity. The long green avenues through which they passed appeared to her prison walls, opening at the end of a vista only to close in again. The padding of the bearers' feet on the leaf-strewn track sounded like the thudding of muffled drums, monotonously endless.

Half-way along their course, fear once more clutched at her heart. A gust of hot wind fluttered the litter-curtain, lifting it at a corner. She saw one of the bearers glance curiously at the flapping cloth. Had he seen what lay behind it?

Deliberately, she leaned and spoke to the still figure behind the curtain: then her sharp command halted the panting men.

'Pir Khan!' she called. 'The Sahib is athirst. He asks for water.'

Pir Khan, unslinging the water-bottles, stoutly seconded her artifice.

'It is the Sahib's own order,' he glibly directed, 'that ye, oh brothers, quench likewise your thirsts.'

Joan waited for a few moments, while the men drank from a stream, then mounted and rode forward.

At length, the long green corridors drew to an end. And with their ending there passed the terror that had beset her. There came in its place a sense of triumph, the realisation that, whatever had been the malignant spell cast upon her and Brian, she had vanquished it, both for him and for herself! If only Brian might live . . . ! There came to her the certainty that he would live, that she would have her reward!

She looked back again to where the jungle stretched steeped in the sunshine. Its beauty no longer seemed to her that of a vampire: she saw it once more as she had seen it during the early days of her sojourn. Brian was young; he would have many more years of service there: but now she would not be afraid to return.

A few miles of open road, powdery with dust, aglare in the noon-day. Then, the cluster of bungalows at headquarters . . . Norah Durrant helping her, as she swayed from the saddle. . . .

Some two hours later, Doctor McClintock, a cheerful smile on his face, entered the drawing-room.

'He'll do now, Mrs. Durrant,' he said. 'After a severe shock such cases of coma are not uncommon. His wife's a grand woman!'

Norah asked eagerly: 'She's asleep. Worn out. May I tell her?'

The doctor laughed. 'Of course! Good news never killed anyone! He's out of the wood.'

TALES OF LAWRENCE OF ARABIA.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL W. F. STIRLING, D.S.O., M.C.

I FIRST met Lawrence in the Intelligence Department in Cairo in the very early days of the War. Woolley (later to become famous as the excavator of Ur of the Chaldees) and he had been roped in to serve owing to their considerable knowledge of Syria, Palestine and the Northern Arabian Desert. Both were young and both were brilliant in their several ways. They were individualists and laughed at the military machine: to those of us professional soldiers who had a sense of humour their mirth was refreshing in the extreme, for they said the things that we longed, but on account of our upbringing did not dare, to say. They were not always right: they did not realise that the control, movement and supply of such large masses of men necessitated system with a capital 'S,' and to them as artists all system was abhorrent.

The Intelligence Department of G.H.Q. was in close touch with the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force and we very soon realised how extremely ill-found the latter was in all matters relating to mapping and printing. Now printing was one of Lawrence's hobbies and in particular he was an expert in the compilation of maps from aeroplane photographs, a comparatively new art which at that time, it seemed, had not reached India, and so it was decided to send him to Basra to elucidate its mysteries. We asked him at the same time to bring us back a report on anything he noticed out there which might be of interest to us in Egypt. The report that he brought back was devastating. Here was a young second-lieutenant who spared no one in his criticisms. He criticised the quality of the stones used for lithographing, the system of berthing barges alongside the quays, the inefficiency of the cranes for handling stores, the lack of system in shunting and entraining on the railways, the want of adequate medical stores, the blindness of the medical authorities and their want of imagination as to their probable ultimate requirements. And, horror of horrors, he criticised the Higher Command and the conduct of the campaign in general!

The Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Archibald Murray, who was a distinguished soldier of the old school, expressed a desire to

see the report. There was consternation that night in the General Staff, for we were convinced that, if he were to read it, apoplexy would be the result and we should lose our C.-in-C. Hurriedly, therefore, we sat down and bowdlerised the report until we considered it fit to be put before his professional eye! Lawrence, however, was abundantly right in most of his criticisms—particularly on the medical question—as was proved by the tragic muddle which occurred when the wounded first started coming down.

From then on Lawrence vanished into the shimmering deserts of Arabia where, with a small band of British officers, he fomented, fused and shaped the Arab Revolt which, in time, became such a powerful instrument in the undoing of the Turk. One heard of him in snatches as performing exploits of such amazing audacity that our machine-made minds almost refused to give them credence. We argued that such things were not done and that therefore what he had in reality effected could not be true. The authorities, however, were shaken up to the truth when a small man in Arab garb, fine drawn with blistered and parched lips, climbed into a launch from the Asiatic bank of the Suez Canal nearly opposite Suez and demanded from Admiral Wemyss that a ship should be sent round immediately to Akaba, which he stated he had just taken, to bring food to his force, then literally starving, and to take over his Turkish prisoners. The Admiral, to his everlasting credit, immediately complied and, in defiance of the usual 'red tape' formalities, a ship sailed that morning.

Akaba was needed as an advance sea-base for the Arab forces as they moved north, but, though a naval squadron had shelled it, landing troops from the sea, in the face of the strongly posted Turkish forces there, was an extremely dangerous and hazardous proceeding. Lawrence, therefore, with a small force of Bedouin had made a six-hundred-mile detour and come down on the Turks from the east, fought two stiff engagements and captured the town and forts. He then found himself and his force of some five hundred Arabs with seven hundred Turkish prisoners and with no food at all except for the few green and unripe dates which were still growing on the trees. The problem was how to get the news of his position to Egypt and to obtain the necessary supplies, for, in addition to his anxieties for his own men, he expected at least two thousand fresh Bedouin to join his standard as the result of his victories—and these men would also have to be fed.

Lawrence's ride from Akaba to Suez is a feat which has been

too little chronicled. He himself and most of his men had averaged fifty miles a day for the past month, and men and camels were worn out. It was a grave question whether they would be able to cross the hundred and fifty miles of Sinai desert to Suez before the camels dropped from exhaustion. There was only one well in the whole route and no hope for any man or beast who fell out. He started, however, with seven of his escort—the picked and most famous riders of all Arabia—and got through in forty-nine hours. It was an amazing effort, which no one who has not ridden a really tired camel can fully appreciate.

My next contact with Lawrence was in the early summer of 1918 when I was sent to join him as a special Staff Officer with instructions to bring up a big green Vauxhall car for the use of the Emir Faisal. We landed at Akaba, and I was told that I might conceivably find Lawrence somewhere up the hills of Moab. It was an interesting trip from several points of view. Of course, there were no roads and we had to coax the gleaming and beautiful new car up dry torrent beds which, in normal times, would be considered quite impassable; farther on we had to run the gauntlet of the more zealous of our allies who, having lately been issued with new rifles, were desperately keen to test them—and what more fitting target than a moving car?

Arrived at Abu Lissan, some five thousand feet up, I found Lawrence, who had just returned from a most successful raid on the railway, sitting in his tent on a beautiful Persian rug looted from some unfortunate Turkish train. He was dressed, as usual, in the most immaculate white robes with the golden dagger of Mecca in his girdle. Outside lolled some of his bodyguard cleaning their rifles and crooning softly to themselves and undoubtedly enjoying the quiet contemplation of some particularly devilish bit of work which they had just perpetrated. They were a remarkably interesting collection, numbering just under a hundred. Most of them belonged to the Ageyl and were hired soldiers by profession. Not one of them but was famed for some daring deed, and for hard living, hard riding and hard swearing they were the pick of Arabia. This bodyguard was a very necessary precaution, for there was a price of £20,000 on Lawrence's head, and Arabs are treacherous folk—unless they are your sworn and paid men. Any one of his bodyguard, however, would have cheerfully died for Lawrence.

There was another reason why picked men were necessary.

Lawrence's movements were sudden and his rides long and arduous, and few ordinary Arabs cared to cover at a stretch the distances which he did. It is an amazing thing that an Englishman should have beaten all the records of Arabia for speed and endurance. The great Sagas, sung throughout the desert, of phenomenal rides carried out by despatch riders and dating back to the days of the Caliph Haroun al-Raschid, have been completely eclipsed by Lawrence's achievements. On one occasion he averaged a hundred miles a day for three consecutive days. Such endurance as this is almost incredible. I myself have ridden fifty miles in a night, but never, never do I want to do it again! The difficulty is to keep awake. After the bitter cold of a desert night, when the sun begins to rise and a warm glow envelops everything, the urge to sleep becomes a veritable torture. If you sleep you are apt to fall, and it is a long way from the top of a camel to the ground. The only efficacious method that I discovered of keeping myself awake was to hold up one eyelid with a finger and thumb—but this again is a very tiring and laborious proceeding.

What was it that enabled Lawrence to seize and hold the imagination of the Arabs? It is a difficult question to answer. The Arabs are notable individualists, intractable to a degree and without any sense of discipline, and yet it was sufficient for almost any of us to say that Lawrence wanted something done—and it was done. How did he gain this power? The answer may partly be that he represented the heart of the Arab movement for freedom, and the Arabs realised that he had vitalised their cause; that he could do everything and endure everything just a little better than the Arabs themselves; that, by his investment with the gold dagger of Mecca, he ranked with the Ashraf or the descendants of the Prophet, and the Emir Faisal treated him as a brother, as an equal; that he seemed to possess unlimited gold—for the average Arab is the most venal of all people. But chiefly, I think we must look for the answer in Lawrence's uncanny ability to sense the feelings of any group of men in whose company he found himself; his power to probe behind their minds and to uncover the well-springs of their actions.

Not the least interesting episode of our Arab campaign was the attack and capture of the station of Mudawwara, a strongly held post on the Hedjaz Railway, by the British Camel Corps under Colonel Robin Buxton. This small force was conveyed by Lawrence

through the country of our Arab allies, quite unknown to them, through the country of the semi-hostile sections of the Howeitat tribe, launched to the attack on the sacred Hedjaz Railway and then brought up on a wide sweep northwards and eastwards to Jefer and Azrak, miles behind the Turkish lines, and so back to Egypt via Abu Lisan and Akaba before the Turks ever knew what had hit them!

We were now in July, 1918, and Lord Allenby was working out his plans for the great advance on September 19, which was to put Turkey out of the War for good and all. The rapid and prolonged forward movement of so large a force necessitates the most careful preparation imaginable. Stores, supplies, forage, ammunition and spare parts have to be secretly massed in forward dumps, railheads brought as far forward as possible and every form of transport concentrated immediately behind the front lines. Allenby intended to strike on the Turkish right flank and push north along the coastal plain where his cavalry would have greater scope.

Secrecy was all-important, for, had the Turks withdrawn their right flank for even ten miles, all the immense preparations would have been very nearly useless and would have to be made all over again. Now, two attacks had already been made on the enemy's left, and the Turks undoubtedly felt that this was their weak point. The mission of the Camel Corps was to confirm them in that impression.

The Camel Corps, three hundred strong, arrived in Akaba on August 1, having come down from Bir Sheba by easy marches. The open-eyed astonishment of such Bedouin as were there was amusing. Never had they seen so many red-faced Englishmen in a lump. After supper Lawrence had the men collected round a large central blaze and gave them the straightest talk I have ever heard. He explained the general situation to them, told them that he was going to take them through a part of Arabia where no white man had ever set foot and where the Arab sub-tribes were none too friendly, that there was no need to worry about the Turks but every need to worry about our allies the Bedouin. They were mistrustful folk, he said, and would most certainly think that we had come to take their grazing-grounds. The essential thing was to avoid any cause of friction. If any were offended or insulted he begged of them to turn the other cheek—both because they were better educated and therefore less prejudiced and also because they were so

very few. The men were delighted and retired for the night, thinking that they were about to embark on the greatest rag in the history of war—as perhaps they were!

In the morning we left the Gulf of Akaba and started up the gorge of Itm, a stony torrent bed winding up between great cliffs and every now and again strewn with boulders as large as cottages, bad going for camels and trying for both man and beast after the flat desert of Sinai.

The Somali and Sudanese camels, on which the bulk of the men were mounted, can do a bare three miles an hour, and so presently we were caught and passed by Lawrence and his escort swinging along on their great camels with their five-mile gait. First rode Lawrence all in white, his robes billowing behind him, his white kufieh or head-scarf held down on his head by a gold and scarlet double-ringed head-rope. He was riding the great Gazala, a she-camel renowned throughout Arabia and the cause of more than one inter-tribal war. Then came his bodyguard in twos and threes, riding the most magnificent camels, gay with coloured trappings and great swinging red silk tassels—it seemed as if their very devilment had to seek expression in colour.

The midday halt gave us little rest, for the sun in August beats vertically down and to touch an exposed rock blisters the hand. I think no one was sorry when we moved on. After passing the red cliffs of Nejed, we turned south down the most amazing gorge it has ever been my lot to see. Here we were very soon in deep shadow with cliffs soaring up a thousand to fifteen hundred feet on either side of us. There was something quite unearthly about the place, and shortly men and beasts were moving in utter silence, awed perhaps by the recognition of their own insignificance. The rock formation was of red sandstone and, as the sun westerned, the light on the eastern cliffs was lovely beyond description. At the great rock of Khuzail we turned sharply east through a narrow break in the cliffs into a vast natural amphitheatre. Here, some three hundred feet above us, the vertical formation ceased and the strata became horizontal. Where the break occurred was a line of bushes and small trees and there the water was oozing out—the only water to be had for days around.

The Howeitat, whom we found encamped there, were most resentful of our presence: from time immemorial no European had been known to penetrate here. Were we not in the land sacred to the Mohammedan faith?—a very defilement in the face of Allah

and of Mohammed his prophet! Had it not been for the actual presence of Lawrence and Hazaa (one of the Ashraf, or descendants of the Prophet) we should have had a very difficult time. Although these two were able to allay the suspicions of the chiefs, we were continually sniped at from the surrounding darkness which had closed down with unusual suddenness owing to the great heights encircling us.

Our next task, and a very important one, was to water the camels. There would be no more water till we got to the railway-line and had captured the station—and that was three days away. If we were unsuccessful it would mean five days' march to the next watering-place—and this, with British troops, was an anxious consideration. If we failed at the railway we would *have* to go on, for it was obvious to me that not one of us would get back alive through those awful gorges in the face of the hostile Bedouin.

The camels had to be led up a rocky path to a spring almost three hundred feet vertically above our heads where they could be watered five at a time—a lengthy process when over five hundred camels had to be watered. The situation with the Arabs was pretty uncomfortable, but the Sheriff Hazaa occupied himself with the disgruntled Howeitat and I with the Beni Atiyeh, and by mid-day Lawrence thought it was safe to leave us and return to Akaba. The watering went on all day. The camels, climbing up over the boulders, looked like so many fleas, so dwarfed were they by the great heights above. We found some interesting hieroglyphic inscriptions carved on the rocks by the spring, and Lawrence told me that they were in a script so far completely unknown to the modern world.

The next thing to do was to reconnoitre the Turkish position at Mudawwara which we were to attack. No one had seen the country, although Alan Dawnay, Robin Buxton and myself had spent hours in Cairo poring over air photographs of the Turkish trenches and planning the scheme of attack.

We started off the next day about 3 a.m. with the column, and then six of us, in two Talbot cars and dressed as Bedouin, pushed on twenty miles ahead through the most desolate and lifeless country. Not a bird or an insect was to be seen, nothing but a snake glimpsed for a moment and a few lizards. The cars, straining in second gear, were making the deuce of a noise and we had to stop about three miles from the Turkish position for fear they should

hear us. Each took a rifle and bandolier, and started trudging up a *wadi* towards the high ridge ahead of us. It was one o'clock in the afternoon—and hot. Only the woodwork of our rifles was touchable and our boots felt like frying-pans.

As we topped the ridge we saw the telegraph poles alongside the railway sticking up through the mirage like the spires of a cathedral. We worked through a group of small hills and, after careful scouting, edged round to the forward face of a great sandstone peak where we hid ourselves in the shadow of some rocks.

From here we had a glorious view of the Turkish position. On our side of the railway were three forts on three hills, heavily entrenched and with an unpleasant amount of barbed wire; just visible on the far side of the hills were the station buildings, the top of the water tower and the windmill pump; beyond were to be seen zigzagging trenches running out into the plain to protect the station from the east. In the camp everything seemed to be going on as usual, a few sentries here and there, an officer smoking a cigarette outside his bivouac and men going down the hill to bring up teas, etc. It looked as if the Turk had as yet no knowledge of our approach. We were so close that it was a marvel that we were not seen, but we got away without incident and arrived back at the cars a very limp and exhausted party. The drivers, bless them, produced a concoction of cocoa made with water from a rain pool in which several camels had lately died. With unflinching courage we swallowed it—to our great content and betterment! Thus refreshed, we went back to the column, where we arranged to attack an hour before dawn and to do everything with the bayonet and without noise.

Owing to the grunting and gurgling they would make when halted and forced to kneel, we left the camels some distance away and advanced on foot in three columns, the idea being to come round between the station and the forts and to attack from the inner side. It was very difficult to lead, for, of course, none of us had ever been over the ground, and it was already getting light when we got into position. Another ten minutes and we should have been in a thoroughly nasty predicament, spread out on a dead flat plain swept by machine-gun fire and with no friendly base behind us! However, the surprise was complete and we captured two of the forts straight away and the other after an hour's fighting. In the process we took a hundred and fifty prisoners, two field-guns and three machine-guns, and not a man got away. The last fort

caught Robin Buxton and myself in the open and we covered a hundred yards in the fastest time that either of us has ever done.

While we were watering the camels at the station pump, a strong Turkish patrol from the next station down the line walked straight into our arms to its no little surprise.

After blowing up the water tower and the steam pumps and blowing in the wells, we mounted and moved out eastwards into what seemed nothingness—dancing shimmering mirage through which it was impossible for the eye to pierce. It was a curious bit of desert this, composed of completely black pebbles, round, shiny and polished. After two days we came to Jefer, a small oasis of five wells, east of Maan, and here Lawrence met us and led the Camel Corps in a great sweep northwards, coming down on the railway-line again two hundred miles away. Unfortunately a Turkish aeroplane spotted the column, and we knew that, once the alarm was given, an organised attack must be made by us, which would have meant British casualties. This was not what we wanted. Rumour would already have magnified the strength of our force tenfold, and by now the needful effect had undoubtedly been produced. Buxton's men were therefore brought back to Akaba and returned to Allenby with only some fifteen casualties—having done a march that was a credit to any troop in the world.

One of the most picturesque of the Arab leaders with whom we were in contact was the great Auda, chieftain of the Abu Tayi section of the Howeitat tribe. He was the very Bayard of the desert, one of the greatest raiders of all time, loved, revered and feared from Medina to Aleppo and from Bir Sheba across to Basra. He deliberately kept his tribe in enmity with other tribes so as to have greater scope for raiding. He had the tawny eyes of a lion which, when he was excited, blazed as if lit from within. His face with its thin aquiline nose and finely cut nostrils was haggard and fierce. Too dynamic, too forceful to be termed beautiful, it was something much more than that. The Arabs have it that he has never done a mean or unworthy action, and only to see him is to believe it. 'A man is a man and the world is made for fighting,' is his creed. He is reputed to have killed over seventy men with his own hand in battle, not counting Turks whose slaying was to him a mere occasional incident and not worthy to be included in the 'bag.' He had been wounded thirteen times and married twenty-eight times. His great amusement of an evening when

seated round a glowing fire was to make up the most appalling stories about any of his friends who might be present, tearing their characters to shreds to the huge delight of his other hearers. He named Lawrence the 'Imp of the World,' which is about the most apt and terse description of him that has ever been given. It was he who led the cavalry charge on the Turks at Abu Lisan—thundering down the mountain-side with fifty horsemen after him straight into a battalion of Turkish infantry in the valley below. On this occasion he had five or six bullets through his clothes, his field-glasses smashed, his pistol holster shot through, his leather sword scabbard scored by bullets—and yet was himself unscathed.

Lawrence headed the charge of the Arab camelry riding his famous racing camel. Going all out, she far outdistanced the rest but was shot through the head as she reached the Turks. Travelling at about thirty miles an hour, Lawrence was hurled from his saddle as from a catapult and lay stunned in the middle of the Turkish square. Little quarter was given that day owing to the recent killing of all the Arab women in a near-by encampment, and soon over three hundred Turks lay dead or dying. A few got away and about a hundred and fifty prisoners were taken.

Auda Abu Tayi, in spite of his fifty-odd years, was always up to some prank, and I well remember on one occasion when Faisal and I were driving across the desert in the green Vauxhall car, followed by Auda with his son Mohammed in a Ford, that he amused himself—but not us—by shooting from the rear seat of the Ford at our back tyres in such a fashion as to miss them by six inches each time. I looked round at Faisal to see how he was taking it and found him smiling gently. 'It pleases Auda greatly,' he said, 'and, anyway, he never misses.' I confess I had not the same conviction, I felt that a Ford car, whose springs had been mended and bound up with telegraph wire, travelling at twenty-five miles an hour over bumpy ground, was none too stable a platform for fancy shooting.

After the raid of the Camel Corps on Mudawwara came a period of comparative calm, while we were preparing to transport our forces northwards to the neighbourhood of Deraa. Lawrence's plan was to come up behind the Turkish lines and sit astride the main Turkish line of communications three full days before Allenby struck his blow with the British Army in Palestine. We thought that the very impertinence of the idea made it feasible and that,

if things turned out badly and Allenby's push did not succeed, we could perhaps get away and take refuge in the mountains of the Druses and subsist there for a year, if need be. We certainly could never go back.

Our entire route would be through desert and so we had to make a string of dumps of petrol and oil tins and another series of dumps of biscuits and flour for the men; for meat, we should have the camels if necessary and they, poor beasts, would have to live on whatever they could pick up as we went along.

The fact that there was no fighting gave the Arabs time and spirit for quarrelling among themselves, and Faisal and Lawrence had the devil's own time in smoothing things down. The whole affair was complicated by the constant receipt of insulting telegrams from Faisal's father, the Sheriff Hussein, who, sitting in Mecca, was jealous of the importance attached to Faisal and the regular Arab Army at the front. Things got so bad that three days before we were due to start, the officers of the Regular Army resigned in a body as a protest, and it proved a very ugly and difficult corner for Lawrence to turn.

This trouble, however, was taken in hand by that first-rate soldier Nuri Pasha, now Prime Minister of Iraq, assisted by Colonel Joyce, who was the senior British officer with us and who, besides being perhaps the biggest man in the British Army, was also one of the best liked. All the transport business was arranged by Major Young, now Sir Hubert Young and Governor of Nyasaland, one of the best brains thrown up by the War. In addition to all this there were the age-long feuds between the Arab tribes, feuds which, although temporarily suppressed owing to Faisal's influence, were only slumbering and were ready to burst into flame at a chance word.

It was an education to listen to Lawrence at one of the Arab Councils. When in debate some sheik became a little difficult, Lawrence, from his amazing knowledge of the past life and inner history of every leading Arab, would let drop a hint or reference to some small disreputable incident in the sheik's past which was generally enough to silence the man in question and put the rest of the Council in a good humour.

His memory was prodigious. I may here recount a minor instance. One day I was setting out to blow up a five-span railway bridge. Just as I was starting, Lawrence came up to me and said, 'Oh, look here, when you come to the bridge you will see a

small bush apparently growing out of the masonry somewhere about the middle of the third span. Where the bush is, you will find that a whole series of stone blocks has been missed out right across the arch. If you are in a hurry or are being fired at, you will find this an excellent place for laying the charges as very little tamping will be necessary and you will be able to get away quick.' Lawrence had seen this bridge once in the days before the War when he was wandering through Syria and Palestine engaged on archaeological work and presumably had no thought at the time of blowing up railway bridges. How such details had remained in his mind passed my comprehension.

As the campaign rolled northwards, Lawrence and I rode our camels less and less. The going was good and we made use of the two-seater Rolls Royce sent down to us from Cairo. This was rather a famous car in its way, as it was the first of a series produced by the Rolls Royce Company and, as such, named by them the 'Blue Mist.' It had been bought and given as a wedding present to a distinguished official of the Foreign Office who had brought it out to Cairo on his honeymoon. Commandeered, it had come to us and we had stripped it of its luxurious trappings and put on a disreputable box body. Its mission was to carry Lawrence and myself and a few sacks of gold sovereigns which we needed for paying Bedouin tribes and purchasing forage for the camels. But this car *could* go, and it was a treat to get into her, after days of the slow and seemingly inevitable pace of the camels, and feel her being pushed up to sixty or seventy miles an hour on the mud flats which are a peculiarity of the deserts of Eastern Syria. It was exciting, too, because on a mud flat there is almost always a mirage, and at one moment you appear to be driving directly at a town of mosques and minarets and domed palaces; you rub your eyes in astonishment and, instead of the town, you are driving straight into a most beautiful blue lake with short green turf growing right to the edge and clumps of palm-trees. It is all very confusing till you come to the end of the flat and hit the rising ground with a bump, and thank God you have got a good chauffeur.

According to Lawrence's plan, we had blown up and destroyed three separate lines of railway behind the Turkish lines three days before the British had attacked on the Palestine front, successfully ham-stringing the Turks and preventing supplies or ammunition being sent up to the front. We buzzed like flies on the Turkish flank and the rear, never settling for any length of time, and always

on the move. It was far too dangerous, anyhow, to keep still. We would camp somewhere as the sun went down and have a meal of sorts and then, about 9 p.m., pick ourselves up and march off in another direction for seven or eight miles so that the Turks never knew where to find us.

As the British advance pushed irresistibly north, we harried the retiring Turks, our irregular Bedouin horsemen never, never leaving them alone. Many Turks died of exhaustion, and even actual starvation, because no food could reach their forward dumps after we had cut the railway line south of Damascus.

We came into touch with General Barrow's cavalry division, which formed the right wing of the Cavalry Corps, at Deraa in the course of the now historic pursuit. Lawrence and I had to get back and spend a night in Deraa to see how the Arab Governor there was faring. In the morning we found that all possible tracks to the north were blocked by the cavalry transport. What to do? We drove the Blue Mist up on to a disused railway embankment from which the rails had been lifted, and, driving over the stone ballast, we were able to avoid the blocked routes and so got through.

Not long after, we drove through the advance guard and the screen of scouts and let the car out till we caught up with our own irregular cavalry under the Sheriff Nasir. On the way we passed hundreds of straggling Turks too exhausted or too surprised to do anything as we buzzed by. We found Nasir and Nuri Shalaan, the head of the great Ruwalla tribe, together. They were temporarily holding up about three thousand Turks, the remnants of the Fourth Army, who had turned at bay on the slopes of a great mountain. Nasir was still riding his celebrated stallion, a dark chestnut Arab, looking as fresh as if just out of the stable, although he had been ridden without change in a running fight for a hundred miles up from Deraa.

Realising the situation and that we had in front of us the whole of the Fourth Turkish Army which might be very troublesome if given time to dig itself in, Lawrence and I turned and dashed back at full speed to get a horse battery or two pushed forward by the leading cavalry division so as to keep the Turks on the move.

The officer commanding the cavalry advance guard was particularly stuffy with Lawrence and evidently resented intensely that our little Rolls should be able to dash about with impunity miles in advance of his cavalry, which was moving northward at the time

with infinite and quite unnecessary caution. It was really very funny to watch his face when we gave him all the news of what was going on over the next ten or twelve miles ahead. Apparently this was not war according to the text-book, and our action was most reprehensible. We left him rather curtly and pushed on till we found General Gregory, the Brigade commander, who promptly ordered forward the guns we needed and a fresh cavalry regiment. They got up to Nasir's position just as dusk was falling, and succeeded in breaking up the Turks, who were re-forming for a very gallant and final counter-attack on our men. The guns were only in action for a few minutes, but it was enough, and night fell.

The cavalry and gunners went back within their outpost lines, but Lawrence and I rolled up in our blankets on the ground close by the car just where we were, and, while the driver tinkered with his beloved engine, we talked. But he was not happy. His mind was too complex to permit of satisfaction for an achievement successfully carried out. He was too sensitive of his honour. His moment of triumph was embittered by his knowledge that the British Government would be unable to carry out the spirit of the promises made to the Arabs. His dark mood saddened me, for I was very fond of him. I pointed out that since he had exposed the whole situation to Faisal, placing the contradictory promises—which had been made almost simultaneously to the Arabs and to the French—side by side, and had given Faisal the opportunity, with this knowledge before him, of choosing whether he would go forward with the movement or withdraw, he himself was absolved of all moral responsibility. I implored him to take a more rational view, but with little avail. This attitude of mind has endured and may account for much which seems obscure to the outsider as regards Lawrence's life and outlook since the War: his self-immolation as an aircraftsman in the Air Force; his refusal of all rewards or honours; his refusal to touch one penny from his book *Revolt in the Desert*, all profit from which he has allotted to military charities. He carried on through the War for the sake of his country, but has steadfastly refused any advancement or profit resulting from his actions. Any breaking of faith, no matter how sound the political reasons might be, was abhorrent to him.

It was a windless and beautiful night, with a suspicion of chill on the ground. In front of us lay the long ridge which hid the plain of Damascus and the two Biblical rivers of Abana and Pharpar. In front and to the right loomed the great bulk of Jebel

Mania, round whose base could be seen points of fire showing where the remains of the Fourth Army was desperately defending itself in small scattered groups against the fierce Ruwalla tribe, led by the relentless and ruthless Nuri ibn Shalaan. It was indeed extermination, for the Arabs had much to avenge. Behind the hill lay Auda abu Tayi with the Wuld Ali tribe, barring the way to Damascus, and not a Turk escaped alive.

As we were dropping off to sleep we were roused by a succession of terrific though muffled explosions, and soon the sky in the direction of Damascus became pink and then red. The violence of the explosions shook the ground where we lay, and we were twenty miles away!

Lawrence rolled on to his face and propped himself up on his elbows. 'Good God!' he said, 'they are burning the town!' And indeed it seemed that this must be so. This was a terrible blow to us both, but Lawrence, turning to me, merely said: 'Anyhow, as you know, I have sent the Ruwalla forward, and in the course of the night we should have four thousand horsemen in and around the town.' It afterwards transpired that we were wrong, and the light we had seen in the sky came from the blowing up of the ammunition and supply dumps by the Germans as their last effort before their departure.

Just before dawn we moved up on to the Kiswe ridge and pulled up at a small stream to have a wash and shave. We had barely completed this important operation when we were sighted by a patrol of Bengal lancers. With shouts of triumph they galloped down and made us prisoners. Lawrence, of course, was in full Arab dress and I, though in uniform, was wearing the Bedouin head-dress and a camel's hair 'abiyah' or cloak, which completely covered me. Being unable to talk Urdu, I threw open my cloak to show my uniform, in the vain effort to explain that I was an officer of the General Staff. It was no good. All I got was a prod behind from the point of a lance. Most unpleasant—but these fellows were so pleased at having caught somebody! Luckily we soon came to an officer and were able to explain the situation. He immediately released us.

We got back to our car as quickly as possible and then pushed on across the plain and caught up with the Sheriff Nasir on the outskirts of Damascus, and we all entered the ancient city together. I shall never forget my feelings as we slowly forced our way through

miles of streets packed with people. There were dervishes dancing in front of the Blue Mist, fierce Bedouins in their flowing robes, their horses mad with excitement at the noise and the shouting of the townsfolk who were hysterical in their joy, Turkish soldiery bewildered and seemingly apathetic and, here and there, a German soldier who had chosen to remain and be captured rather than face the retreat. As we drove through the streets with their overhanging houses, the women of the harem leaned out of their windows crying, laughing and sobbing with joy and excitement. Breaking through all tradition, they tore off their veils and showered upon us flowers, attar of roses, and other strange perfumes.

Lord Allenby had allowed Lawrence twenty-four hours to organise and instal a provisional government before the British troops were to be permitted into Damascus. To this task Lawrence set himself without delay. A governor was appointed, a police force enrolled and officered, medical officers told off to districts, and sanitation gangs arranged for, in order to start a general clean-up of the town. A thousand and one things had to be thought of, but never once was Lawrence at a loss. A French protégé, the Emir Abd el Kader, irked at not being named governor, started a revolution with his Algerian following and a section of the Druses. Lawrence quelled this in no uncertain manner. I knew nothing about this at the time as, thinking all was quiet and going on well, Sheriff Nasir and I had retired below ground to have a very much-needed Turkish bath. When we emerged we found machine-guns at every corner, dead Algerians lying in heaps, and the revolution over.

Three days later, when Lord Allenby entered Damascus, Lawrence was able to hand over to him an ordered town purged of almost all trace of war, a government functioning with ease and rapidity, and a population filled with joy and relief at the passing of Turkish rule.

Many stories have been told about Lawrence, mostly untrue, but if ever a genius, a scholar, an artist, and an imp of Shaitan were rolled into one personality, it is Lawrence.

The question is often asked: Why cannot the Government employ him? Why is he allowed to be wasted doing merely his allotted task as an aircraftsman in the Air Force? Here in England we produce a man who, in the opinion of many, is a rare genius, and we do not use him. Why? The answer is difficult. There are several factors to be considered. First and foremost, it

is unlikely that Lawrence would accept any employment of a nature befitting his standing. Were he employed, for example, as the head of a mission in the Orient it would be too dangerous from the Government's point of view. Lawrence is guided solely by his conscience, and would not dream of carrying out any instructions from Downing Street if such instructions happened to clash with what he considered the right thing to do. Were he employed in any subordinate executive capacity, his brilliance and amazing brain would probably render the position of his superior impossible.

But all the same it is a thousand pities that when a genius is given to this world it so often happens that the world does not realise the true value of such a gift.

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

A LITERARY Acrostic is published every month, and the Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers two prizes to the most successful solvers. The winners will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. If several solvers send solutions of equal merit, the two whose answers are opened first will win the prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 116.

'Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ——.'

'And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping ——.'

'O! then I see that madmen have no ——.'

'How should they, when that wise men have no ——?'

1. 'A little weeping would —— my heart,
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!'
2. 'Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in ——.'
3. 'But he saw on Palatinus
The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
That rolls by the towers of ——'
4. 'Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the —— of time.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page i in the preliminary pages of this issue : and he must be careful to give also his real name and address.
4. Solvers should not write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
5. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
6. Answers to Acrostic No. 116 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50 Albemarle Street, London, W.1, and must arrive not later than April 20. No answers will be opened before this date.

ANSWER TO No. 115.

1. N ette D
2. O liv E
3. B lu E
4. L an D
5. E ye S

PROEM : *The Princess*, ii.
The Princess, iii.
Idylls of the King. *Guinevere*.

LIGHTS :

1. *The Brook*.
2. *Maud*, part 1, section 1, stanza 9.
3. *The Lady of Shalott*, ii.
4. *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, vi.
5. *The Beggar Maid*.

Acrostic No. 114 ('Heard Sweet') : The first two answers that were opened and proved to be correct came from Mrs. G. S. Nash, The Priory, Ringmore, Teignmouth, S. Devon, and Mr. E. Syers, The Club, The Avenue, Bedford Park, Chiswick, W.4. These two solvers will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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